

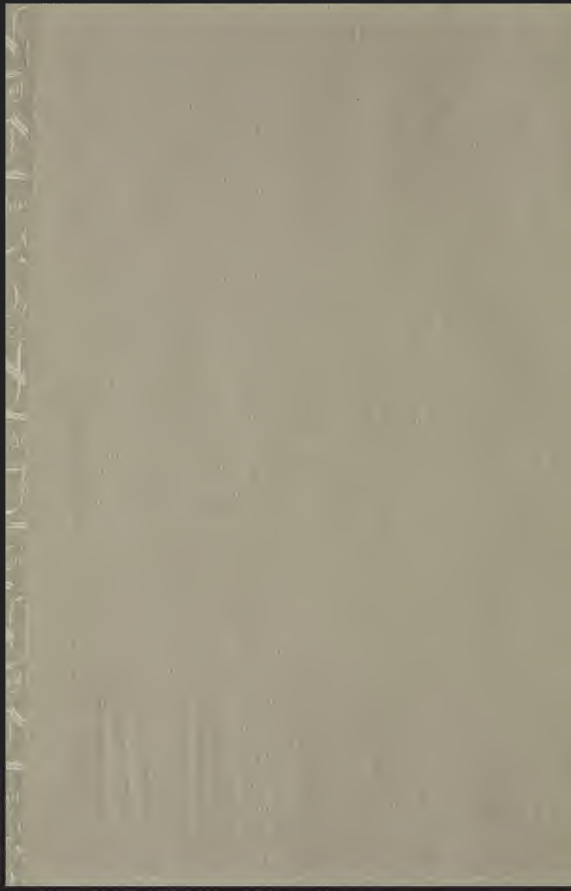
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MONTEZUMA	CAPTAIN PIPE	KEOKUK
GUATIMOTZIN	LOGAN	SACAGAWEA
POWHATAN	CORNPLANTER	BENITO JUAREZ
POCAHONTAS	JOSEPH BRANT	MANGUS
SAMOSEY	RED JACKET	COLORADAS
MASSASOIT	LITTLE TURTLE	LITTLE CROW
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FRONTIER LEGEND

TEXAS FINALE
OF
CAPT. WM. F. DRANNAN
PSEUDO FRONTIER COMRADE
OF
KIT CARSON

Based On Research

2/BATE/

3/1954/

BY
W. N. BATE



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TEXAS FINALE
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CAPT. WILLIAM F. DRANNAN
PSEUDO FRONTIER COMRADE OF KIT CARSON

Based On Research

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*Results of Research on Capt. Drannan who Published Two Books in Which
He Made Claims of Association with Kit Carson for
a Period of at Least Twelve Years.*

Reviewed by
THE WRITER'S CLUB
of the
CORPUS CHRISTI FINE ARTS COLONY
Corpus Christi, Texas

OWEN G. DUNN COMPANY, Publishers
New Bern, North Carolina

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Grateful appreciation is extended to the following persons for their assistance, interest, and cooperation in aiding the author to compile the facts and material upon which this work is built.

- Mr. E. W. Winkler, formerly Librarian, UT, Austin, Texas
Mrs. Grace Perkins, Mineral Wells, Texas
Mrs. Marcelle L. Hamer, Librarian of Texas Library, UT, Austin, Texas
Mr. Ernest McKinney, Mineral Wells, Texas
Mrs. Lora H. Steele, Librarian, La Junta, Colorado
Mr. Marvin J. Hunter, Editor of *Frontier Times*, Bandera, Texas
Mr. C. A. Scheurich, Merchant, Clovis, New Mexico
Mr. LeRoy H. Hafen, Director of State Museum, Denver, Colorado
Mr. Edwin L. Sabin, Author, Hemet, California
Mr. W. S. Campbell, Professor of English, Norman, Oklahoma (Stanley Vestal)
Mrs. Rogers Parratt, San Francisco, California
Mr. J. W. Goodbar, Mineral Wells, Texas
Miss Henria Pepper, Austin, Texas
Mrs. Roy Woodruff, Librarian, Mineral Wells, Texas
Mrs. Chas. Maley, Woodson, Texas
Mrs. Early Hall, Woodson, Texas
Rev. Seba Kirkpatrick, Mineral Wells, Texas
Mr. O. R. Hyde, Hastings, Iowa
Mr. Bob Massengale, Texas Rangers, Austin, Texas
Mr. H. G. Jackson, Publisher, Chicago, Illinois
Mr. W. P. Cameron, Editor of *Mineral Wells Index*, Mineral Wells, Texas
Miss Minnie Tygrett, Mineral Wells, Texas
Mr. George Metcalf, Palo Pinto, Texas
Mr. Boyce Ditto, Mineral Wells, Texas
Mr. Gib Abernathy, Palo Pinto, Texas
Mr. John C. Mitchell, Accountant, Houston, Texas
Miss Agnes W. Spring, Denver, Colorado
Miss Ina Auls, Librarian Western History Department, Denver, Colorado
Mr. H. A. Sherman, Denver, Colorado
Miss Elsie Jenkins, Librarian, Kinsley, Kansas
Major General Edward F. Witsell, The Adjutant General, Department of the Army, Washington, D. C.
Mrs. Roy S. Evans, Head of English Department, Del Mar College, 3654 Lawn view, Corpus Christi, Texas
Mrs. Howell Ward, 1900 Stillman, Corpus Christi, Texas
Mrs. Allen, Writer's Club, Corpus Christi, Texas
And various members of the Corpus Christi Writer's Club.

PREFACE

As a boy about eight or ten years of age I read many adventure books such as the Alger type and others of that kind. I obtained these books from the district country school library and from neighbors and relatives. My Uncle John Bate heard of my reading and loaned me a book that he had purchased on a train. It was a book of historical nature, written on frontier life, and contained stories of hunting, trapping, wagon trains, scouting, and Indian fighting. This book was the first of this type I had ever read. It told me much about Kit Carson and other frontier men of his kind. I had never read of Carson before.

The author told of being taken under the protective wing of Carson at an early age, and of being taught the ways of the frontier by him. This book was interesting and I was greatly pleased. The title of the book was *Thirty-one Years on the Plains and in the Mountains*, and the name of the author was Capt. William F. Drannan. After reading that book, Drannan and Carson were my heroes for many years.

Since that time, I have talked with many people that had read the same book, and all considered it to be an interesting, readable work, but not being historians none took the trouble to doubt the authenticity of it. Besides, the preface of the book stated that the contents are true.

Several years later I read the life of Kit Carson written from a historical standpoint, and was much surprised to find no mention of the boy, Drannan, whom Carson was supposed to have taken and treated as a foster son. Later I read the lives of other frontier men who were mentioned in Drannan's book. No mention of Drannan was found in any of them. As I gradually acquired a smattering of frontier history from reliable sources, I came to realize that Drannan's book might not be above suspicion as to accuracy of statement.

During a period of time while occupied at the University of Texas I came upon Drannan's book in the library and decided that I would use a part of my spare time to satisfy my curiosity concerning this author, and learn about the origin of the book, and possibly do a bit toward correcting frontier historical data, and also, perhaps obtain a bit of mental revenge by uncovering him. But curiosity was uppermost, and later, as the investiga-

tion progressed, mere fascination in the project became another leading motive.

So much time had elapsed since the death of Drannan in 1913 that his trail was dim and obscure, and each new factor discovered was brought forth only by great effort. Numerous auto trips were made, dozens of interviews were held, and several hundred letters were written. A record of all interviews was made and placed in file together with letters, photographs and returned questionnaires, all of which may serve as substantiation of the material of this writing, if desired by anyone.

I now have the satisfaction of knowing that Drannan in reality, was a likeable, congenial relic of the frontier who liked praise and respect. He was probably guilty of trying to create reasons or cause to deserve praise, but he meant no harm by it, and he had to make a living.

At the end of the investigation, I no longer had a revengeful feeling toward Drannan. I was his friend again.

W. N. B.

FOREWORD

THE FRONTIER SITUATION

America has had a frontier since the earliest days of white settlement. When the English settled on the eastern coast in 1607 and later, their frontier extended westward as far as they cared to visualize, and for some time they did not see farther than the Allegheny Mountains. After the land back to the Alleghenies had all been taken up by white settlers, the pioneer minded ones began crossing the mountains and settling on the western slope of the mountain range. Then the frontier extended to the Mississippi River. After the United States purchased the Louisiana Territory in 1803, another vast area was opened up to immigration, or rather, to migration, and people from the east and from foreign countries began traveling across the United States westward in the greatest migration known in history.

The pioneer spirit was strong in America, and the people were ever going westward to get new land and more of it. The edge of civilization was dimly marked, but from an approximate north-south line, to the outer edges of sparse settlements, was a zone of semi-civilization. This north-south line was not straight by any means, but extending fingers of civilization advanced from it here and there at points where the soil or other natural advantages attracted settlers. To many settlers in this zone schools were not available, and their children were allowed to grow up unable to read and write, but they were strong and hardy and well fitted, generally, to wrest their livelihood from the soil and woods, which factors were plentiful.

Beyond the western edge of sparse settlements was the ever receding frontier. As the sparse settlement zone filled, more straggling settlers wandered singly or in groups into the nearby frontier-edge to settle, and in this manner, throughout the years, the frontier edge was pushed forward steadily westward by the advancing civilization.

But shortly after the civilization line had reached and passed the Mississippi River, something happened which complicated the migration situation. People had learned about the western coast lands. There was gold out there, and good land, and fine climate, all of which was more desirable than the country lying between the west coast and the advancing settlement line which was largely mountains and desert. At this stage there sprang

up the wagon trains and the overland freighting business that extended through the unsettled desert frontier country all the way to the west coast. The Santa Fe Trail and the Oregon Trail were famous routes that were developed during this period. The Santa Fe Trail existed from 1822 to about 1872, an approximate period of fifty years. Much of the later frontier history was connected in some manner with these wagon trails. The Indians tried hard and long to erase these primitive highways and many wagon trains and individuals came to grief at their hands. This western migration was never stopped. However, the valiant and desperate efforts of the Indians created a unique frontier situation in which many incidents of frontier historical fame were enacted. A complete history of the famous trails requires volumes.

These trails carried many people straight through the middle desert country to the west coast. Most of the people were going to the newly discovered gold diggings to make their fortunes. By far the greater percentage of these folks never found gold, and had to turn to the land for sustenance. They, together with those who landed from ships on the west coast, spread over the country taking first the land along the coast, then later advancing toward the east as more land was needed.

By far the greater portion of this westward moving mass of humanity desired to stop close enough to civilization to have contact with their fellow humans, or even to have neighbors, and to develop community life which included the advantages and blessings of civilization. But there were many who had a roving spirit and who loved the western plains and mountains above all else. From this group came the type required for successful handling of the frontier situation. They were either attracted to the frontier by the kind of life offered, or they were born on the frontier and developed within it. In any case the frontier had the type of men needed. They chose a life without schools, and in which they had to face savage Indians, the raw elements, the deserts, and the wild animals. They craved adventure and risked their lives daily to obtain it. They preferred to live their lives out in the Indian country where their personal freedom was as boundless as the prairies over which they rode. They were the forerunners of the future orderly settlements that were always following them. They contributed largely in the work of clearing the land of bad Indians and the buffalo, which riddance made the country available for settlement. It is interesting to

note that this same riddance eliminated the jobs of the same frontiersmen who executed it and they were left without a way to make a living.

These frontiersmen acted as guides and scouts for wagon trains and for Government troops. Their business was to know the country, where the watering places were located, the passes in the mountains, and the crossings of the streams. They had to know Indian sign, and Indians, their habits, whether they were friendly or unfriendly, and if unfriendly, how to fight them successfully. They had to have good guns, and had to be experts in handling them, for it was a time in which the fastest man with a gun was the man who continued to live.

The men of the frontier, as a rule, liked to tell of their deeds. Some were modest in their recitals while others were a bit boastful and may have even borrowed some of the deeds related. They had no newspapers and their only means of communication was by word of mouth when they met at various isolated locations on the plains and in the mountains. This was their method of keeping posted on the events of the month or season. In addition to spreading the news they also told of their own deeds and actions, and under this system it was inevitable that errors and exaggerations would creep in. Thus many stories were well warped in the retelling.

The Indian also told of his deeds. He called it "counting coups".

Men of all classes made up the frontier population. Some were educated, but many could not read or write; some were criminals and some were parsons. Many of these pioneers died in action, and many survived. Of those who died, their deeds usually died with them. Of the best ones that survived, we have records. They lived to write their stories, or permitted others to write for them. Such men as Daniel Boone, Kit Carson, Jim Bridger, Charles Bent, William Bent, and others, who had from time to time performed some service for the Government by piloting troops or wagon trains across the desert and mountains, or had completed some other work that was beneficial to the public welfare, were the class of men whose performances required that their deeds be noted in history. They were good and reliable men, valuable to life and property on the frontier, and they were outstanding characters in their field.

There were other men of lesser caliber who went with them, and who shared their dangers every day but have not been mentioned by the historians because no one has told the his-

torians about them. Historians are always glad to write of something or someone if they know they are writing facts. But facts they must have. Occasionally some one of these possibly forgotten men may have attempted to write his own life, and granting that he wrote the truth, his work would still be obscure if he wrote in such a manner that his statements cannot be substantiated by others. He may not have had an education, or if aged, his memory may have been faulty, but if he were sincere and well-intentioned and wrote a readable book, the public may have accepted it as history. A number of books of this type have been written and they perform a useful function.

Then there was the old frontier-relic type that was willing to borrow the deeds of others and call them his own. This habit was probably developed around the campfires on the frontier in the earlier days. Perhaps if such a man had reached old age and needed funds upon which to live, he would do the best he could to produce an entertaining book which the public would accept and buy regardless of whether it were historically accurate or not. It is true that many nice frontier books have been published as fiction; but they were represented as fiction and sold as such. A peculiar situation is presented when a book of fiction is published and represented to be true by the author. If such a book is represented to be of historical nature, the historian will read a few pages of it and lay it aside in disdain, knowing well that it is untrue, but will do nothing further about it. But the average person does not have a store of historical knowledge by which to judge such a book. The reader would be inclined to believe the statements written to be true, especially if the preface of the book so stated. Such a condition could continue indefinitely if no historian or reader was ever moved to establish the correct status of such a book. The historian is far too busy dealing with true and proven facts of history to stop and work on an unimportant untrue production written by an obscure and historically unimportant character.

However, it seems logical that the history readers in the nation have a right to know whether they are reading fact or fiction, without having to acquire a knowledge of history equal to that of the professional historian in order to determine authenticity for themselves.

At the present time the only system devised to screen the true from the untrue is the system of investigation and comparison, and, in the end, this could be the best of all for the purpose; because the true facts are brought to the surface.

CHAPTER I

THE CASE—THE RECORD OF DRANNAN

A book entitled *Thirty-one Years on the Plains and in the Mountains* was published in 1900, and another book entitled *Capt. Wm. F. Drannan, Chief of Scouts* was published in 1910. Wm. F. Drannan was shown to be the author of both books, and the preface of each book stated that the narrative written therein was true. Among the claims made by Drannan in these books is the allegation that he was taken under the protection of the famous Kit Carson in 1847 and taught the ways of the savage Indians, and was taught the arts of hunting and trapping on the plains and in the mountains. This association with Carson was alleged to have continued for a period of at least 12 years. Evidently Drannan was somewhat familiar with the ways of the frontier, as the books have the language and atmosphere of those wild, rough days. They are quite interesting to the average person who reads for amusement and has never made it a practice to read much history. But after the historian has read a few pages of the Drannan books doubts immediately begin to arise concerning the accuracy and truth of the statements made in the stories therein.

The books were published by the Rhodes & McClure Publishing Company of Chicago and were sold mostly by the news boys on trains, and also some were sold by Drannan in person.

The Rhodes & McClure Publishing Company changed ownership in about the year 1913, and the successor to that company has stated that one hundred editions of the book, *Thirty-one Years on the Plains and in the Mountains*, had been published. Apparently then, at least several million people have read this one book alone. It is in many libraries and available to all. Most library copies observed were well worn and repaired as though they had been handled often and read many times.

This book brought a certain amount of fame to Drannan. The question came up as to whether he was entitled to fame for having written a book, or for having executed the actions as described and claimed in the book. In the language of the frontier, did he include only his own "coups" in his narratives, or did he borrow the "coups" of others and weave them in with his own?

CHAPTER II

GENERAL OPINION IN THE CARSON CIRCLE

In his books Drannan claimed to have first met Kit Carson at a hotel in St. Louis in the year 1847, and that he was with Carson during most of the following twelve years. His description of the meeting with Carson is interesting. Drannan had asked the proprietor of a hotel for a job of work, and was refused. He was only fifteen years old and the hotel proprietor thought he was too young. He then started to leave the hotel with tears in his eyes. He tells of the incident:¹

I had nearly reached the door when a man who had been reading a newspaper, but was now observing me, called out:

"My hoy! Come here."

I went over to the corner where he was sitting and I was trying at the same time to dry away my tears. The man asked my name which I gave him. He then asked where my parents lived, and I told him that they died when I was four years old. Other questions from him brought out the story of my boy-life; Drake, Gen. Jackson, the negro boys and the brutal negress; then my trip to St. Louis—but I omitted the hornet's-nest incident. I also told this kindly stranger that I had started out to make a living for myself and intended to succeed. Seeing that this man was taking quite an interest in me gave me courage to ask his name. He told me that his name was Kit Carson, and that by calling he was a hunter and trapper, and asked me how I would like to learn his trade. I assured him that I was willing to do anything honorable for a living and that I thought I would like very much to be a hunter and trapper. He said he would take me with him and I was entirely delighted.

The investigation of Drannan's claims of association with Kit Carson produced very interesting results. In this present year, 1949, the trail left by Drannan is dim and obscure, and most people now living who knew Drannan personally were young during the acquaintance and do not remember too much about him. But a number of persons who knew him personally were located. They were interviewed by letter and in person and from these contacts certain definite opinions were established concerning Drannan's way of life. Opinions, when similar and numerous enough, may frequently amount to something closely akin to proof. Such a situation may be compared to a "preponderance of evidence" in court procedure, which, if sufficiently preponderant, may cause conviction.

¹*Thirty-one Years on the Plains . . .* by Wm. F. Drannan. p. 24.

Various communications concerning Drannan's claim of a twelve-year association with Carson revealed no proof of the claim.

An interview conducted by the librarian^{1A} of La Junta, Colorado, with Mrs. Lupe Carson, widow of Kit Carson II, son of the famed Kit Carson I, revealed an interesting fact concerning Drannan. The librarian wrote concerning this interview:

Mrs. Carson says that some time ago when her husband was still living, Mr. Drannan came to La Junta and tried to establish a connection with the Carson family. The family did not know him and Mrs. Carson stated that as far as she knows there was no connection between Drannan and Kit Carson I.

It is hard to imagine that the daughter-in-law of Kit Carson, who is said to have a fair knowledge of the Carson History, would not be familiar with the details of an association of Kit Carson with any person that had endured for a period of twelve years, if such an association had ever actually existed.

Out in the frontier town of Bandera, Texas, lives Mr. J. Marvin Hunter, Editor of the Frontier Times Magazine, Editor of the Bandera Bulletin newspaper, and owner and Curator of the Frontier Times Museum. Mr. Hunter is noted as a frontier historian and for his interest in frontier lore. The Frontier Times is a monthly publication that features only true stories of the frontier and of Texas. On account of this type of work Mr. Hunter has access to a vast supply of frontier history. Concerning Drannan, Mr. Hunter wrote:

"I am sorry that I have never been able to learn anything about Drannan. I met him in San Angelo about 1909, and talked with him, and at the time I decided that he was never under Kit Carson. I have considerable information on Carson, particularly his own *Kit Carson's Own Story of his Life* and nowhere does he mention Drannan. Drannan's book, *Thirty-one Years on the Plains and in the Mountains* was published to sell on trains, and thousands of copies were sold by the train butchers. I do not know who wrote the book for him, for he was somewhat illiterate."

In a subsequent interview, Mr. Hunter stated that he was living in San Angelo during 1908 and 1909 and during that time Drannan was observed to be located at a corner on the street wearing a buckskin suit with fringes and beads. He was seated in a leather bound chair by a small table which held several of his books which he was selling to make a living. J. Marvin Hunter and his father passed by one day and in the conversation that ensued the elder Mr. Hunter asked Drannan if he had been

with the Indians during a part of his life. Drannan replied that he had been with the Comanches, the Apaches, and the Lipans, and that he spoke all three of those languages. The elder Mr. Hunter then asked Drannan if he spoke Spanish. Drannan replied that he did not speak Spanish. The Hunters then walked on and the elder remarked to his son, J. Marvin, "That man is a fake. If he was with the Apaches he would have had to speak Spanish, as the Apaches have so much Spanish in their language that one would have to speak Spanish in order to converse with them." The elder Mr. Hunter was a teacher by profession and had lived in Mexico and was quite familiar with the Spanish language. It seemed that Drannan did not stay long in San Angelo. A visit of approximately three weeks duration was mentioned by Hunter.

Some years after the meeting with Drannan, Mr. Hunter was publishing a newspaper in the gold-mining town of Bland, New Mexico, at the time of its boom days. It was a thriving gold mining camp and had a population of 900 at its peak, and then the gold-bearing veins faded out. Within a month the population dropped to thirty. During his stay in this camp, Hunter met and became acquainted with old Aloys Scheurich, the nephew by marriage of Kit Carson. Scheurich had married the daughter of Governor Charles Bent of Taos, New Mexico, who was married to the sister of the wife of Kit Carson. Aloys Scheurich had seen much of Carson and was at his side when Carson died at Fort Lyons, Colorado, in 1868. By the time that Scheurich and Hunter had met, Scheurich was rather aged, but he liked to talk about his friendship with Carson. Hunter, being young and intensely interested in any frontier history and any other folklore that he could obtain, met and talked frequently with Mr. Scheurich and encouraged him to tell about Kit Carson. Scheurich was much pleased to do this.

But in all these conversations, Scheurich never mentioned anyone by name of Drannan to Hunter.

Hunter exhibited another interesting factor. Dean T. U. Taylor of The University of Texas had made a present to Hunter in the form of a copy of the autobiography of Kit Carson referred to above as *Kit Carson's Own Story of his Life*. On the inside of the cover was written in pencil in Dean Taylor's handwriting, the following:

Drannan was born in 1832 and remained on the plantation with Drake until 1847. He could not possibly have been at Carson's wedding in 1843.

For clarification of this point the explanation is that Drannan claimed¹ that he attended the wedding of Kit Carson and Josefa Jaramillo at Taos, New Mexico. This wedding took place in the year 1843 as Dean Taylor stated, and that was four years prior to the date on which Drannan claimed to have met Carson for the first time in St. Louis.

A most interesting and convincing trace of information came from Mr. C. A. Scheurich of Clovis, New Mexico, who is the son of Aloys Scheurich, and grandson of Governor Bent, and grand-nephew of Kit Carson. Mr. Scheurich may be considered well within the Carson circle and in giving his opinion concerning the claims of Drannan, he explained that he had never heard through his relatives or friends, or from any other source, that Drannan and Carson were ever associated, or had even ever met and become acquainted. Concerning a meeting with Drannan, Mr. Scheurich wrote:

"Wm. F. Drannan came into my office several years ago with some local acquaintance, and introduced himself as being a great friend of Kit Carson. I tried to talk to the gentleman, but he did not seem to know anything except what the public knows about Kit Carson. I let him talk a long time, and when he was ready to go, he tried to sell me a subscription to a book he was going to write, and that is all I know about the man. My opinion is he did not know anything about Carson. He did not know even the most trivial and familiar things about the man."

An opinion such as this coming from a man who is in the circle of the group with which Drannan claimed affiliation must carry weight. During his lifetime Mr. Scheurich has met thousands of men who wished to discuss Carson and associates of Carson. As a blood-relative of the wife of Carson, he has been much sought after for information concerning Carson. In the numerous discussions involved, he must have heard and learned something about all the men with whom Carson was ever associated. At least it would have been impossible for him not to have heard about any associate that had been with Carson for a period of twelve years, as Drannan so claimed. The absence of any information in the possession of Scheurich concerning the association of Drannan and Carson is significant evidence against the claims of Drannan.

An interesting opinion came from Mr. LeRoy R. Hafen, Executive Director of the State Historical Society of Colorado. Mr. Hafen wrote:

¹*Thirty-one Years on the Plains and in the Mountains*, by Wm. F. Drannan. p. 155.

"I confess to having read but little of Drannan's book. When he told of watching 'Uncle Kit' read the newspaper, it threw grave suspicion upon his story. I have not seen his name in any contemporary writing of the Carson period."

That Carson could not read or write until during the latter part of his life is generally known.

Mr. Hafen is an eminent authority in history. He was called to Scotland to teach American History during the winter of 1947 and 1948. Therefore, his opinion in this matter is recognized. His mention of the lack of any reference to Drannan in any contemporary writing of the Carson period is staunch support of the other similar opinions quoted.

Kit Carson's life has been written by several different authors, but the most exhaustive and detailed work on Carson has been written by Mr. Edwin L. Sabin, of Hemet, California. The title of his work is *Kit Carson Days*, and it consists of two large volumes of approximately 800 pages each. As stated, this work contains a very detailed account of the life of Carson. There is no mention of Drannan anywhere in *Kit Carson Days*. Mr. Sabin has also written a large number of other books on frontier characters. In the productions of his many works it was necessary for him to achieve a vast amount of research in gathering the material necessary for the productions. Any association of Kit Carson's that had lasted for as long a period as twelve years could not have escaped him. Again the absence of any mention of Drannan in any material unearthed in the research process is stable evidence against the claims of Drannan. Sabin wrote:

It would give me much pleasure to help you check up on Drannan, but all I know of him is his book, *Thirty-one Years* — — — . . . No, I have never come upon mention of Drannan, outside of his own narrative. . . . Drannan's own say-so appears to be his only record, so far as his connection with Carson goes.

Another interesting work on the life of Carson is the book entitled, *Kit Carson, The Happy Warrior of the Old West*, written by Stanley Vestal. Mr. Vestal has also produced a number of books on other western characters, and his research for material to compile his works could not have failed to uncover any part of Drannan's part in wild west history had it been there available for discovery. Vestal has written the following concerning the alleged association of Drannan and Carson:

"This question has come up before, but I never found any evidence that Drannan knew Carson. Of course, if he was on the frontier

when he claims to have been, he might easily have known Kit, as mountain men were few on the frontier. Carson had an organization of hunters, trappers and guides over a period of many years, and a good many frontiersmen were at one time or another in his employ, but no roster of this organization exists, and whether Drannan had any part in it, I think, is unknown. At any rate Drannan, or his ghost, wrote a readable book."

Again it is the usual absence of mention of Drannan that creates the doubts of Drannan's claims. Mr. Vestal's opinion is a parallel to the other opinions quoted.

The Library of Congress courteously furnished the following information pertaining to the authenticity of the works of Drannan:

"As you have already learned, there seems to be no mention whatever of Wm. F. Drannan in studies of Kit Carson and the mountain men in general. The two books by Drannan, regarding which you have full details, are available in the Library of Congress collections, and until 1939 our catalogers had had no other evidence for the facts of Drannan's life. In that year a pamphlet was published by — — — — and his book is a chatty account of the Santa Fe Trail and especially of Kit Carson. His last chapter, pp 43-60 is a biographical sketch of William Drannan. The author will probably be pleased to tell you whether he had sources for his information other than Drannan's books."

Examination of the book mentioned by the Library of Congress revealed that the chapter on Drannan was a condensation of Drannan's book, *Thirty-one Years on the Plains and in the Mountains*.

It is no small factor to note that the Library of Congress has no information on Drannan other than from his own narratives. Consider also, that this institution is the one final resting place in the U. S. of all the copyrighted U. S. Literature. Here is the outstanding case where the lack of substantiation leaves Drannan fully enmeshed in doubt, for the reason that many of those with whom he claimed association have been mentioned in numerous volumes of historical nature, while he has not been mentioned along with them. If any authentic mention of Drannan had ever been made, the Library of Congress would have it.

CHAPTER III

COMPARISON WITH AUTHENTIC WORKS

After quoting the above opinions from historians, authors, and relatives of Carson, which opinions are all unanimous in recognizing the absence of proof and of the statements and claims of Drannan in his books, it may be well to analyze and compare some of the statements which Drannan made.

As mentioned above, the alleged first meeting of Drannan and Carson, as shown on page 24 of Drannan's book, *Thirty-one Years* — — —, took place in 1847 in St. Louis in the lobby of a hotel in which Carson was stopping. Drannan stated that Carson outfitted in St. Louis and that the three of them, Carson, Jim Hughes, and Drannan rode west through Fort Scott, Kansas, and on up the Neosho River and west to Fort Bent.

In contrast to Drannan's picture of Kit Carson's stopping place in St. Louis in 1847, for Carson actually was in St. Louis in 1847, we have the assurance by other authentic writers that Carson was occupied otherwise than as Drannan stated while in St. Louis, and for the remainder of the year 1847. In the book, *Kit Carson's Own Story of His Life*, edited by Blanche C. Grant, Carson stated that he passed through St. Louis in 1847, and that while there he spent a part of his time at the home of Fremont, where he was an invited guest.

Another description of Carson's stop in St. Louis in 1847 and his actions and route after leaving St. Louis is stated on page 575 of *Kit Carson Days*, by Sabin. This chronicle is to the effect that on June 14, 1847, Carson was in Washington, having delivered messages there which he had brought from California, and President Polk appointed him a Lieutenant in the Army. About June 16, 1847, Mrs. Jessie Fremont, wife of General Fremont and daughter of Senator Thomas Hart Benton from Missouri, together with Kit Carson and Ned Beale, left Washington for St. Louis, the home of Mrs. Fremont. In St. Louis Carson met Senator Benton . . . Carson knew he was carrying messages that would be disappointing to Fremont and he was downhearted, and did not have much time to stay. Ned Beale became ill and stayed in St. Louis for treatment. On leaving St. Louis Carson stopped in Howard County, Missouri, to visit relatives, so stated George H. Carson of Fayette, Missouri. From Howard County he went up the Missouri River by steamboat to Ft. Leavenworth

and was given charge of fifty raw U. S. Volunteers with mules, for escort through the hostile Comanche country and for duty thereafter in New Mexico. Carson arrived in Santa Fe and there met his wife Josefa. At Santa Fe the mules and troops were released and Carson later went on to California with sixteen civilians, arriving in Los Angeles in October. Fremont had left California partly in disgrace. Carson did not find him there. However, it was there and at that time that red-headed First Lieutenant of Artillery, William Tecumseh Sherman, and Carson first met. Sherman had heard of Carson and took this opportunity of introducing himself to Kit. In the winter of 1847 and 1848 Carson was assigned to duties at Tejon Pass in California with 25 men, under Capt. Andrew Jackson Smith.

There seems to be no correlation between the two above accounts except agreement on the date of 1847.

Another glaring inaccuracy in Drannan's book, *Thirty-one Years* — — is shown in Chapter 8 beginning on page 140. It is the duel that Carson had with a white man by name of Shewman. That is—Drannan called the man by name of Shewman. Carson wrote that his name was Shunar. The book of Drannan's states:

Early in the fall of 1852 we pulled out for the head of Green River, which was a long and tedious journey, being more than eight hundred miles from Taos and over a rough country. . . . We arrived at the headwaters of the Green River and occupied some of the old cabins that had been erected by the Hudson Bay Company and went to trapping. . . . We stayed there and trapped until some time in February (1853). . . . We again moved camp down to what was known as Hell's Hole. There we found about forty French Canadians trapping for the Hudson Bay Company, who, had plenty of bad whiskey. They were not very friendly toward the new arrivals. Among their party was a big fellow by name of Shewman that seemed to think himself a very bad man; he did not appear to have any love or respect for any American Trapper, which was the case of the general run of those French Canadians who were in the employ of the Hudson Bay Company. . . . The third day after we arrived at the place spoken of, this man Shewman got pretty well ginned up and started out to look for Uncle Kit, saying he had heard a great deal of Kit Carson and of his fighting proclivities, and that he would lick him on sight. . . . It happened that while he was in his rage, Uncle Kit, Jake Harrington and I knowing nothing of Shewman's mad fit, started out to look after our horses and had to pass near their camp. Just as we were passing by their place, Shewman said: "There goes the d—d white-faced American cur. Just like all the rest of the Americans." Uncle Kit stopped and addressed him in the following manner: "I am an American and I feel proud of the name, but I would have you understand that I am no coward. I will fight

you any way you wish." Shewman said: "If you want me to kill you, get your horse and I will get mine, and we will get one hundred yards apart and start at the word. After we start, each fire when we please." . . . Uncle Kit said, "There is my horse, and I will be ready in three minutes." . . . Shewman was on his horse with his rifle in hand. . . . Carson was on his horse with a pistol only. . . . Shewman cried out in French that he was ready and at that moment they both started their horses at full speed toward each other. When within thirty yards, Shewman fired, and . . . missed . . . and when a few yards nearer each other Uncle Kit fired, and Shewman fell to the ground mortally wounded, the bullet passing through his body just above the heart. Shewman lived until Uncle Kit got to him, then he acknowledged that it was all his own fault, and that it was good enough for him. . . . We stayed two days and helped to bury Shewman. This was the first white man that I had ever seen buried in the Rocky Mountains. We rolled him up in a blanket, laid him in the grave and covered him with dirt.

A delay of two days by these fighting mountain men for the purpose of burying an enemy hardly seems logical. In those days life was cheap and violent death was common, and if Drannan had stated that Shewman's friends buried him as soon as he was dead, it would seem to be more in keeping with the customs of that time and that vicinity.

Kit Carson gave a different version of his only duel with a white man. In his book¹ he states that the duel with Shunar was fought in 1835, and his account is in this manner:

There was in the party of Captain Drips of the American Fur Company a large Frenchman, one of those overbearing kind and very strong. He made a practice of whipping every man that he was displeased with—and that was nearly all. One day, after he had beaten two or three men, he said, that for the Frenchmen he had no trouble to flog and, as for the Americans, he would take a switch and switch them. I did not like such talk from any man, so I told him that I was the worst American in camp. Many could thrash him only on account of being afraid and that if he made use of any more such expressions, I would rip his guts out. He said nothing but started for his rifle, mounted his horse and made his appearance in front of the camp. As soon as I saw him, I mounted my horse and took the first arms I could get hold of, which was a pistol, galloped up to him and demanded if I was the one he intended to shoot. Our horses were touching. He said no, but at the same time drawing his gun so he would have a fair shot at me. I was prepared and allowed him to draw his gun. We both fired at the same time; all present saying that but one report was heard. I shot him through the arm but his ball passed my head, cutting my hair and the powder burning my eye, the muzzle of his gun being near my head when he fired. During our stay in camp we had no more bother with this bully Frenchman.

¹*Carson's Own Story of His Life*, edited by Blanche C. Grant, Taos, N. M.

In this narration of the duel Carson does not admit that he killed the Frenchman. But Sabin¹ goes on to say:

The quarrel had a fatal termination, for Carson also remarked to Captain Simpson that "the Frenchman was the only man (white man) he was glad he had killed." That outcome of the duel is traditional in the old beaver grounds. In a letter from Fort Washakie, Wyo., January 1, 1909, "Old Scout" (William) McCabe, who had been in Indian campaigns with Carson, stated: "Carson . . . had resided on Green River in western central part of Wyoming; and here he fought a duel with a Frenchman, whom he killed."

In a later day Captain Smith H. Simpson of Taos had it from Carson own lips that the quarrel rooted in a rivalry for the favors of an Arapahoe girl in the camp. The occasion for a settlement of claims was gladly seized upon. Carson won out, but had the Shunan horse not reared at the moment of fire the result might have been different. By all evidence this was the girl whom Carson married. He was now past twenty-five and had been in the mountains long enough to see values in a keeper of his lodge.

Sabin also mentioned the arrival of two missionaries at the Valley of the Green in 1835. They were Rev. Samuel Parker and Dr. Marcus Whitman. The Rev. Parker testified upon the pages of his *Exploring Tour* an account of the duel which closely parallels the account rendered by Carson. The Rev. Parker did not admit that Carson killed the Frenchman.

Vestal also places the date of the duel in 1835 and gives the story as obtained from Indians who saw the duel in person, and in the main the story is similar to that told by Carson, except Vestal adds the statement that Carson hammered another brass tack into the stock of his gun after the duel.² In replying to correspondence relating to the affair Vestal write that Carson rushed for a second pistol and slew his wounded opponent with it. He stated that Carson and Shunar were rivals for the favor of the Arapahoe Indian girl, Wanibi, whom Carson later married. Vestal wrote:

I think that there can be no doubt that Kit killed Shunar. I believe Sabin got the story from Oliver Wiggins. (Apparently an error). I got it from Watan, an Arapahoe, now deceased. George Bent, the best informed among the Cheyennes, told me that he had always understood that Kit killed Shunar. In the face of such testimony, I think Parker was wrong. Rough men do not tell all they know to a parson.³

¹Kit Carson Days, by Edwin L. Sabin. p. 260.

²Kit Carson, the Happy Warrior of the Old West, by Stanley Vestal. Houghton-Mifflin, 1928.

³Kit Carson's Autobiography, edited by Milo Milton Quafie, La Retama Library, Corpus Christi, Texas.

From the dates given by Carson and Sabin, it will be noted that the duel was actually fought in 1835, and 12 years before Drannan claims to have met Carson in St. Louis. Drannan was born in 1832, and when Carson's duel was fought, he was 3 years of age. One must really doubt that he was out there on Green River watching Carson shoot holes in Shunar in the year 1835. But in his book Drannan needed a duel, so he set Carson's duel date forward 18 years to 1853, and this artifice afforded himself the pleasure of seeing the duel from the sidelines in person.

It seemed that Drannan had a system whereby he could cause a newspaper article to be printed about himself from time to time. The reason for this is not known. If he received money for these articles of historical nature it is not known. His articles appeared in newspapers at least three different times, and copies have been obtained. The surmise is that they were published for the purpose of advertisement of his personality for sales reasons. He was writing books to be later sold at approximately the times the articles appeared. His first book, *Thirty-one Years on the Plains and in the Mountains*, was published in 1900. During the year before, he was in Chicago, where his book was published the following year, and a historical article^{1B} concerning him was published in the Chicago Inter Ocean. The article contained excerpts of incidents that were included in his book the following year. The same article appeared in the Denver Times on date of February 11, 1899, which paper acknowledged that the article was taken from the Chicago Inter Ocean. Perhaps these articles were supposed to create interest in his book that was to come. In the Chicago article, Drannan was a Major. How he came by this rank is not known. In 1910, Drannan's second book, *Captain Wm. F. Drannan, Chief of Scouts*, was published, and on date of October 11, 1910, an article^{2B} appeared in the Houston Chronicle stating that 'Capt. Drannan is in Houston, Texas, and may locate here.' Again it seems that it was an artifice to draw attention to his coming book. In this article he wrote excerpts and incidents that were included in his second book. In the Houston article Drannan was a Captain. How he came by this rank is not known, nor is it known how he came to be reduced in rank from a Major in 1899 to a Captain in 1910. One of the incidents mentioned in several of the articles was concerning the alleged capture of Captain Jack, the Modoc Chief during the Modoc War in 1872 and 1873 in the northern part of California and the

southern part of Oregon in and around the lava beds near Tule Lake.

Drannan's part in the Modoc War is told in his book, *Thirty-one Years on the Plains* — — —, and a few excerpts from his book are quoted. On page 542 he stated that he sold his ranch near the Sacramento River in California in the year 1872, and in the same year he and a Mr. Miller decided to go into the horse raising business. Miller told Drannan he knew of a large tract of swamp-land near Klamath Lake. On page 543 and thereafter Drannan wrote:

This land was located just on the outer edge of the Modoc Indian Reservation. Miller being acquainted with all the Modocs, he and I, after I had concluded to settle, rode down to Captain Jack's wick-i-up which was a distance of two miles from where i proposed settling. Captain Jack was the chief of the Modoc tribe, and I found him to be a very intelligent Indian, and he made a very good stagger toward talking the English language.

In this way Drannan accidentally settled near the Modocs and was there on the ground and saw their sufferings and hunger and naturally knew all the details leading up to the war. He stated that Captain Jack consulted him frequently about the Indian Agent not giving the Indians food that was due them, and later that it was on account of extreme hunger that Captain Jack led his tribe off the reservation to go fishing in Tule Lake to prevent starvation. While at this lake soldiers had fired on the Indians without any warning whatever, because they were off their reservation. Drannan explained further:

I received a message from General Wheaton to come to his quarters immediately. This message was carried by one of his orderlies. I complied and went with the orderly . . . When I was introduced to General Wheaton, he asked me if I knew Captain Jack, Chief of the Modoc tribe. I told him that I was well acquainted with him and all of his men. 'Now' said he, 'I'll tell you what I wish to see you about. Col. Miller recommends you very highly as a scout, and how would it suit you to take charge of the entire scouting force, and organize them to suit yourself and start in at once?' . . . The next day I told him that I was ready to start in scouting for him.

Here followed Drannan's description of his part in the Modoc War as well as the parts taken by the other historical characters known to have taken part in that war. Then he recited the incident of his capture of Captain Jack together with his wife and little girl. He expressed it in this manner:

. . . about the first of June, 1873, George and I had been out all night and were coming into quarter, being a little later this morning than common, and when we were within about one and one half miles from quarters we crossed the trail of three Indians. I got down and examined the tracks closely; there was one track quite large and long, another not so large, and the third was quite small. I told George . . . they were the tracks of Capt. Jack, his wife and a little girl. We reported to Gen. Wheaton . . . He asked me how much of an escort I wanted, and if I would go at once. I told him I would, and wanted two platoons . . . and we were off again in pursuit of Capt. Jack. . . . After we had ridden about twelve miles, and just as we came to the top of a hill, on looking across on the next ridge we saw the three Indians, and sure enough, it was Capt. Jack, his squaw and little girl. . . . When we rode up to him he said, 'Good Morning. Long time no see you.' and at the same time presented the gun with the breech foremost. . . . So I took the little girl up behind me, and George took the squaw up behind him and Jack walked. It was in the afternoon when we returned to headquarters with the prisoners, and there was no little rejoicing among the soldiers when they learned for a certainty that I had taken Captain Jack prisoner.

In this account the public was informed how Drannan had rendered a very valuable service to the U. S. Army and in turn to the American nation.

In comparing Drannan's account of the Modoc War with other accounts of the same war from unimpeachable sources, remarkable differences are noted. H. H. Bancroft was a noted historian in his time and his books are still regarded as among the best of authority that may be had from any source on any subject or incident mentioned in any of his volumes. He has written histories on various states and copies of his works are in all first class libraries. Consider what Bancroft wrote:¹

About half-past one o'clock on the morning of June 1, 1873, Capt. Perry struck Jack's trail five miles east of Applegate, and at half-past ten he was surrounded. He came cautiously out of his hiding place, glanced uneasily about him for a moment, then assuming a confident air, went forward to meet Perry and the officers present with him, Trimble, Miller, and DeWitt, with whom he shook hands. He apologized for being captured by saying 'his legs had given out.' The troops were all called in and the world was allowed to know and rejoice over the surrender of this redoubtable chieftain to a military force of 985 regulars and 71 Indian allies.

Bancroft's account is much different from Drannan's account of the capture of Captain Jack. Also, if Drannan was in the war at all, why was he not mentioned by Bancroft, especially

¹*History of Oregon*, by H. H. Bancroft. p. 630.

since Bancroft thought the lowly Indian allies worthy of mention? If Drannan was not an enlisted man he would not be included in the 985 regulars, but his account states that he was hired by General Wheaton to take charge of the entire scouting force, which was composed of civilians. One fact concerning this situation must be borne in mind as being definite. A historian, such as Bancroft, would never omit mention of an important unit such as civilian scouts if the civilian scout unit had actually ever existed. Such an omission would be a severe blot on the record of any historian.

Bancroft also mentioned the capture of Captain Jack in his volume, *California Inter Pocula*, published in 1888. In writing of the final phases of the Modoc War on page 558, he stated:

After being pursued to Langell Valley, half their number surrendered, including Scarface Charlie; Capt. Jack availed himself of the parley to hasten away, only to be intercepted by a detachment under Capt. Perry, to whom he gave himself up on June 1, together with a few followers.

Thus we have the same story that Capt. Jack was captured by Capt. Perry from two different works of Bancroft. This does not leave Drannan much to stand on as far as accurate history is concerned. Bancroft's works mentioned above were recommended by the Managing Director^{2A} of the California Historical Society, as being the best known accounts of the Modoc War.

There were other accounts of the capture of Capt. Jack which do not in the slightest way agree with Drannan's account. The *History of California* by J. W. Caughey, published by Prentice Hall, 1940, stated:

Captain Jack accompanied by three forlorn followers came out and surrendered.

This was after the Modocs had left the lava beds. No mention was made of Jack's squaw and little girl.

Albert Britt, author of *Great Indian Chiefs* lists Captain Jack as one of the great chiefs and gives a brief account of the Modoc War. Concerning the capture of Capt. Jack, he wrote:

. . . Fighting began again on April 14. In three days the troops advanced three miles. The Indians broke up into smaller bands of which some were caught. Hooker Jim was caught with them and offered to bring out Capt. Jack. When Jack came, only three warriors were with him.

In addition to the above accounts is the account of the capture of Capt. Jack as published in the *Quarterly of the Oregon His-*

torical Society, Vol. 8, #1, p. 44. The title of the article is "A Soldier of the Oregon Frontier" by Will J. Trimble, the same Trimble mentioned above by Bancroft. It is a detailed account of the capture of the famous Indian chief and does not contradict Bancroft. It is given as follows::

... Here soon arose the unfortunate Modoc War. By this time Trimble was a veteran in all sorts of fighting, being adept in Indian craft. His account of the capture of the Indian leader, Captain Jack, seems of special interest. He narrate that, while operating under ranking Capt. Perry, he separated with his command from the latter and took an independent course. He had with him two Warm Springs Indians, who were expert trailers. After a few hours these struck the trail of three or four Indians. This trail was followed rapidly. After some time a queer Indian dwarf appeared on a rock ahead, making signs of friendship. This was Job, who was closely attached to Jack. After some parleying, Jack himself appeared and surrendered. The writer is acquainted with a certain scout who also claims to have captured Jack. But his account cannot be said to be unimpeachable, while that of Trimble is circumstantial and is confirmed by Bancroft in general.

Another most interesting account of the capture of Capt. Jack is contained in a book written by one Jeff C. Riddle. He was the son of Frank Riddle and Winema, a Modoc Indian woman. Winema was also known as Toby Riddle. She and her husband, Frank Riddle, were the interpreters for the U. S. Army during the Modoc War and were present when Capt. Jack killed General Canby at the conference. Jeff C. Riddle had every reason to be well versed in the Modoc War. His mother was one of the Modocs. He lived, and was brought up, in the vicinity of the Modoc tribe and he knew each of the Modocs in person. There were not many in the whole tribe. He wrote a book that was published in 1914, the title of which is *Indian History of the Modoc War*. In a statement to the public on a front page of his book, he remarked:

"I have read Capt. Drannan's book, *Thirty-one Years on the Plains* —, where he wrote about the Modoc warriors. According to what he says, he captured and killed more Modoc warriors than Capt. Jack really had when he commenced fighting. Jack had only fifty-two warriors in all. I knew every one of them. It is such men as Mr. Drannan who misleads the public in regard to Indian wars. Mr. Drannan certainly was not anywhere near the Lava Beds at the time of the Modoc War of 1872 and 1873, as I do not remember meeting him at that time."

Evidently Mr. Riddle, being in part a Modoc Indian, was out after Drannan's scalp and wanted to 'count coup' upon him. Appar-

ently he was quite justified in wanting to do so, for the evidence is strong and clear that Drannan had created his own 'coups' when he wrote about his part in the Modoc War.

On page 111 of Riddle's book he stated that Col. Alvin C. Gillem and Col. Wright used Warm Springs Indians as scouts. This is in accordance with the statement of Bancroft that the Army had 71 Indian allies. On page 149, Riddle gave his version of the capture of Capt. Jack. He stated it in this way:

Scarface Charlie, a Modoc who had left the Modoc side and hired out as scout for General Wheaton. General Wheaton had detailed five soldiers to go with Charlie in search of several Modocs including Capt. Jack. They captured three Modoc Indians and were taking them to Tule Lake when they saw Capt. Jack running for all that was in him with Hooker Jim, a Modoc scout, and two soldiers in pursuit. Scarface Charlie reined his horse in ahead of Jack and told him to stop. Jack was out of wind. He fell to the ground and wept like a child. Finally he got up and told the soldiers he was ready to die, or go with them. One soldier told Jack after Scarface Charlie told him what he said that no one would offer to hurt him if he would go along quietly. Jack gave up his gun and belt, had only five cartridges in the belt and none in the gun.

Assuming that the five soldiers mentioned in this account included Capt. Perry, Trimble, DeWitt, and Miller, then the story of Riddle is not too different from that of Bancroft. The difference is in the manner in which Capt. Jack gave himself up. In any case, it is clear that Jeff Riddle did not have Mr. Drannan around anywhere. Nor did Bancroft and the others have him around at the finale, or at any other time.

Drannan claimed to have settled on some land near the spot where Capt. Jack had his tent placed, in the vicinity of Tule Lake. Inasmuch as it seems quite certain that Drannan was not the party who captured Capt. Jack, investigation of his alleged land purchase in the vicinity of Tule Lake naturally followed. The County Clerks of Klamath County, Oregon, which county is next to the northern California line, and of Siskiyou County, California, which county is next to the southern Oregon line, wrote that no land had been recorded under the name of Drannan in the year of 1872 or thereabouts.

Also, a few years earlier, so Drannan stated, he made his first purchase of land near the Sacramento River. It was in 1867 that he went looking for a place to settle down, and he bought a ranch of 320 acres near the river. His location description is indefinite. The County Clerks of Sacramento County, Yolo County, and

Contra Costa County, all wrote that they had no record of deed for Wm. F. Drannan in the year 1867. Drannan stated that he purchased 320 acres of land near Santa Rosa, California, in 1878, but the Sonoma Title Guarantee Company of Santa Rosa, California, wrote that no record of such a purchase was found. Of course, these alleged purchases were made back during a time when that country was rather new and more or less unorganized, and records may not have been kept on some of the transactions of the earlier days. Until a more complete search is made this instance could not be considered a conclusive case against Mr. Drannan's statements of land purchases, but it certainly has that appearance.

Since Drannan had claimed that he was employed by the U. S. Army during the Modoc War under General Wheaton, and also employed by the U. S. Army under Crooke in Arizona, the historical department of the Army should have had some sort of record of his employment. A report from the National Archives, Washington, D. C., gave the following information:

"January 17, 1949. . . . An examination of the records of the War Department on file in the National Archives reveals no information concerning the service of William F. Drannan. His name was not found on an index of scouts, guides, couriers, etc. compiled by the War Department, nor was it found among the records of the Quartermaster Department relating to civilian scouts."

The National Archives did not leave much room for comment.

Since Drannan had acquired such titles as 'Captain' and 'Major' on different occasions, it may be conjectured that he must have been enlisted as a soldier at some time in the past. His numerous references to scattered Divisions of the Army from time to time would give rise to conjecture about the reasons for such references. A statement from the Department of the Army, Office of the Adjutant General,^{6A} brought this laconic information:

17 March 1949

". . . A search of the records has been made but no record has been found of a William F. Drannan who served as an officer or enlisted man of the Regular Army covering the period from 1860 to 1894."

The Army's letter settled all doubts and curiosity concerning any military enlistment that Drannan might have had.

During the years of the period between 1856 and 1859 Drannan reported in his book, *Thirty-one Years on the Plains* — —, that he and Jim Beckwith were in the southwest on some sort of fron-

tier expedition and while there Drannan spent a part of his time rescuing a white girl captive from the Apache Indians with the help of two friendly Pima Indians. Later they went to Taos and met Kit Carson and Jim Bridger, and the four of them made plans to go to the headwaters of the Missouri on a trapping expedition. They moved from place to place on this trapping excursion and covered the western part of what is now Montana, went over into Utah territory and followed their inclinations until the spring of 1859 which time found them again at Taos, New Mexico.

Drannan's second book, *Capt. Wm. F. Drannan, Chief of Scouts*, published in 1910, places Drannan in an entirely different location during the years 1856 to 1859. This second book does not show many dates. By correlation of the incidents mentioned in both books, it is indicated that Drannan was in Texas with a Captain McKee from 1856 to 1859, fighting the Indians. Drannan and McKee had a gang of fighting men under them and all were engaged in making warfare against the wild savages. But the article in the *Houston Chronicle*,^{2B} October 11, 1910, dates Drannan's Texas experiences more definitely. This article says, "It was in '57 and '58 that I was a member of Capt. McGee's band of Texas Rangers, and some rousin' times we had with the redskins." It will be noted that he spelled the name as McKee in his book, but used the spelling as McGee in the newspaper article. This change of spelling is not understood, but several plausible reasons appear.

In the book, *Chief of Scouts*, Drannan and Capt. McKee were pictured with their band as roaming over the central and north-western parts of Texas and employed in killing Indians and capturing horses from the Indians and driving them to Fort Worth and Dallas and there selling them. In this way they made money to pay their men and to reimburse themselves for their time and effort. No statement is made that either McKee or Drannan were connected with the Government or that they belonged to the Texas Rangers organization. Also, no mention is made about their actions being guided by any higher authority. This part of the narrative is remarkable for the large number of Indians that they located and killed without getting any of their own men killed, and only a few wounded. They roamed to the southeast as far as Austin. And at another time they stopped on the site of where Amarillo stands at present. They also passed through

a settlement, apparently not named at that time, which Drannan claimed later became Childress.

At the time of their last drive of wild horses to Fort Worth and vicinity, McKee and his men heard of the gold discovery on Cherry Creek up near the future site of Denver. They then disbanded and struck out for a prospecting trip. Drannan did not go with them, but later visited Clear Creek tributaries and reported that McKee and some of his former men were on the south fork of Clear Creek and making good money. Drannan disposed of McKee by stating that he was told afterwards that McKee made a good stake, and then went back to Texas and married and bought a home and lived and died in it about seven miles northeast of where Mineral Wells is now.

The two narratives, from Drannan's two books covering the same period of time, definitely show him to be in two different places at the same time. One book shows him to be in the northwest with Carson, Bridger, and Beckwith, while the other shows him to be down south in Texas with McKee. The preface of each of his books states that the narrative set forth therein is true. But conflicting statements do not create truth.

However, Drannan did use some characters in his writings that were authentic. Some were well known, and others were not so well known. McKee seems to be not so well known in a historical way, but a personal investigation revealed that there was a Captain McKee who lived in Texas. So far library research has revealed no record of this McKee, but he seems to have been an interesting character.

CHAPTER IV

VERBAL INFORMATION VIA INTERVIEW AND LETTER

Mr. Gib Abernathy, one-time Sheriff of Palo Pinto County, Texas, for the period from November, 1914, to January, 1931, was formerly acquainted with McKee. Abernathy introduced a grand-daughter^{3A} of Capt. Joel McKee, and also a nephew of McKee by name of Mr. George Metcalf of Palo Pinto, Texas.

Metcalf stated that Joel McKee was born in Indiana about 1824, and later lived in Rushville, Illinois. He went to Oregon in 1847, then back to Illinois, and upon hearing of gold in California, he went to that territory and made money, after which he went to Palo Pinto, Texas, arriving there about 1855 or 1856. He acquired horses about that time and built his herd to a size of 350 or 400 head. He pastured these horses generally to the north of Palo Pinto. Metcalf displayed the records of the Recorder of Deeds of Palo County and the Index of deeds showed that Joel McKee had made and recorded a purchase of land in the year 1857:

Joel McKee bought 160 acres of land from John Reasoner and wife in 1857. Book C. p. 626. Index of Deeds, Palo Pinto, Texas.

The same transaction is also shown in the Record of Deeds, Book A, pp 626 and 627. This land being purchased in the year 1857 was used for pasturing his horses. Before the beginning of the Civil War these horses were stolen by the Indians, but this theft happened after the year 1858 as according to Metcalf, the "Indians did not become mean in that vicinity until after 1858." During the Civil War he was a Captain in the Confederate Army and was taken prisoner and held in jail in Denver, from where he later escaped, together with two Wilson boys. Then he went with General Sibley and helped him and his men through the mountains. He was in the battle of Glorieta, New Mexico, and at a point where they desired to cross a stream, Chivington's troops opposed them. McKee was known to have made the remark, "If that Dog Chivington comes near I will shoot him." McKee moved to Oklahoma about 1900. Before his exit to Oklahoma, Metcalf recalled quite plainly that McKee stated he was acquainted with Drannan and often discussed him in connection with Capewood who was another associate of McKee.

Metcalf had never heard anything about McKee fighting In-

dians in 1857 and 1858, and he emphasized that the "Indians did not get bad in that vicinity until after 1858 or 1859."

Drannan stated that his McKee settled, and lived, and died about seven miles northeast of Mineral Wells, Texas. Inquiry revealed that no McKees had lived in or near that vicinity and that the only McKees in Palo Pinto County had lived in or near the town of Palo Pinto which is about 12 miles west of Mineral Wells. Perhaps if Drannan had stated that his McKee, or McGee, was the Joel McKee that lived at Palo Pinto, such a story might have given the descendants of Joel McKee grounds for a suit of damages. However, since McKee admitted that he knew Drannan, he thereby gives Drannan a slight vestige of foundation to stand on, and Drannan needed it.

All this Indian fighting with McKee and his band took place during the twelve-year period during which Drannan's first book reported that he was with Carson, Bridger and Beckwith, up in the northwest.

Another incident of outstanding interest in Drannan's book, *Thirty-one Years on the Plains* —, was his alleged purchase of a hotel in Seattle, Washington, in 1887. The hotel was supposed to have cost him Sixteen Thousand Dollars. His narrative explains it in this manner:

In the spring of 1887 I took a trip to the Puget Sound country and found Seattle a very lively place; in fact as much so as any place I have ever seen in my life. . . . So I bought out a man named Smith, who owned a big hotel on the corner of South Second and Washington Streets . . . paying Mr. Smith \$16,000 for the property and besides this I spent \$1200 in repairing and fitting it up in shape. I gave it the name of 'Riverside House.' Here I built up a good business in the hotel line. . . . On the morning of June 6, 1889, my clerk came to my room and woke me up, saying that there was a fire in the northern part of town and that the wind was blowing strong from that direction. I dressed at once . . . and was just eating breakfast when one of the clerks came and told me that he could see the fire from the door. . . . That fire wiped me out slick and clean as I did not have a dollar's worth of insurance on the property, and I sold my lots where my hotel had stood at a very reduced price. I tried various speculations on a small scale during this time, but with very poor success. By this time I had spent and lost in speculation about all the money that I had realized for my property, and the outside property that I owned, I could not sell at any price. Since that time I have wandered around from pillar to post, catching a little job here and there, and at this writing I am temporarily located at Moscow, Idaho. . . .

And in this manner the public was informed how Drannan came to be a poor man. But in those days it was rare for a rover and an Indian fighter to be able to accumulate \$16,000. An attempt to substantiate this hotel deal brought an interesting report from the County Auditor of King County, the county in which Seattle is located:

"With reference to one Wm. F. Drannan please be advised that we find a bill of sale recorded in Volume 2 of Misc., p 212, under Auditor's Receiving No. 24789 in which he sold an undivided one-half interest in the Riverside Restaurant, basement of Minnesota House on the Southwest corner of Second Avenue South and Washington Streets, this city. We find no record of his owning any real estate around the year you mention so he was probably leasing or renting the space occupied by the restaurant. This building undoubtedly was burned down in the big fire here in June, 1889, when quite a portion of the city was destroyed by fire. We also find a year or so later that he borrowed \$50 on some household furniture and his repayments were \$3 per month suggesting that he probably had some hard luck in the fire. If you desire a certified copy of the Bill of Sale, we will furnish same for the fee of \$1.10."

This was an interesting clue and the \$1.10 fee was sent and inquiry made concerning the date that Drannan floated the loan of \$50, and when and how he repaid it, the purpose being to learn, if possible, how long he remained in Seattle. Inquiry was also made concerning the bona fide ownership of the Minnesota House. The reply came:

"We enclose herewith a certified copy of the Bill of Sale you have requested. The chattel mortgage referred to was dated March 28, 1890, and was satisfied as of record May 3, 1890. Our search was from 1852, time of beginning of keeping records in this county, until 1910, and we fail to find any other records than those we have told you about. We find no record of how Mr. Drannan acquired his interest in the Minnesota House—may have been merely renting space. We have no record of who owned the Minnesota House at the time you mention. It is possible that the Washington Title Insurance Company, 803 2nd Avenue, this city, could give you that information if you write to them explaining the circumstances."

Examination of the Bill of Sale revealed that, ". . . in consideration of the sum of \$275, gold coin, . . . paid by Mrs. Hattie E. Zook, . . . assigns the following described property, to wit: An undivided half interest in and to the River Side Restaurant situated in the basement of the Minnesota House on the Southwest corner of South Second and Washington Streets in the city of Seattle, King County, Washington Territory, . . ." This

Bill of Sale is signed by Wm. F. Drannan, X his mark, and his wife, Anna Drannan. And thus it was revealed that Drannan was married, although his book did not so state. At this point we are forced to note that Drannan's Riverside Hotel had contracted to a Riverside Restaurant, one-half of which was worth \$275, and was located in the basement of the Minnesota House which he claimed to have purchased. The Washington Title Insurance Company of Seattle reported the following:

"Answering your letter of October 11, 1948, you are advised that Wm. F. Drannan never became the record owner of "Minnesota House" at the southwest corner of Second Avenue South at Washington Street, in the City of Seattle, and in November of 1888, when he made a Bill of Sale to Hattie E. Zook for an undivided one-half interest in the Riverside Restaurant, (located in the basement of the Minnesota House) and the business, furnishings and effects of said restaurant, the title to the real estate stood in the names of Leopold Wertheimer, Emanuel Wertheimer and Joseph L. Hess. We have searched both the direct and indirect indexes in our recording office and the only other instrument we find is a chattel mortgage recorded in Volume 8 of Chattel Mortgages, p 217, dated March 28, 1890, executed by Wm. F. Drannan, a Real Estate Agent, and Anna, his wife, to Henry Brannan, covering furniture and furnishings in "Room 609, Pike Street, in the City of Seattle."

In this manner the insurance company revealed who actually owned the hotel that Drannan claimed he had purchased for \$16,000. But it would look much better in a book to have owned a \$16,000 hotel than to have owned a basement restaurant. It seemed that Drannan needed a reason to show why he was short of funds, and the \$16,000 hotel story plus the fire supplied a good reason for his purposes. But in this hotel investigation, it was verified that Drannan actually did go to Seattle, as he said, and he did buy something connected to a hotel, but did not quite get the hotel itself. The story was a partial truth, but the partial portion pointed the wrong way.

In the foregoing pages no mention has been made concerning the end of Drannan, nor concerning his later days. No accounts or articles were available to show what he did when he became old or where he lived and died. Take Kit Carson for an example. Almost monthly account of his steps could be obtained during the latter part of his life, and most people that have read of him with any interest know that he is buried in Taos, New Mexico. Frontier Historians know that Jim Bridger spent his last days near Kansas City, and that Jim Beckwith was delegated to go back to his Crow Indian friends, together with some other peace

delegates, and that he died while with them; probably being poisoned by his Indian friends to keep him from leaving them again. Years before, he had been a chief in their tribe and they had high regard for him. Something can be learned about Wooton, Baker, Williams, and many other more obscure frontier characters by going to any first class library.

If an attempt should be made to learn something about Drannan in any library, it would soon become evident that all information located about him would be contained in the two books that he wrote about himself. This is quite unusual and strange, for in his books, Drannan acknowledged that he was with Carson off and on for about twelve years, and also was with Bridger and Beckwith (Beckwourth) on different occasions, as well as with the Army men Crooke and Fremont.

Curiosity arises from the fact that biographers of the frontiersmen with whom Drannan claimed he was closely associated make no mention of him. Obscurity of Drannan everywhere except in the books of Drannan was instrumental in causing this investigation to be started, and in February, 1947, the publisher's name was obtained from Drannan's book, *Thirty-one Years . . .* which proved to be the Rhodes & McClure Publishing Company, located in Chicago with no street address shown. A communication was returned marked, 'Addressee Unknown'. After several months of search a former head-librarian^{4A} of Texas University suggested that the files of a publishers weekly magazine be searched for the missing address, and after a prolonged search, a Chicago street address finally appeared. The publishing company had changed hands in 1913, it was learned, and the successor of the Rhodes & McClure Company kindly wrote a most useful letter of pertinent information. His communication, dated May 3, 1948, furnished a start toward the information for which search had been made for more than a year. Concerning Drannan, the writer stated:

I have visited his grave in Mineral Wells, Texas. He is buried in a little cemetery in the eastern edge of the city. At his grave there is a monument about four feet high.

This latter publisher further stated that he used to visit Mineral Wells years ago, and on different occasions saw Drannan on the streets offering his books for sale. He also stated that more than One Hundred Editions of *Thirty Years on the Plains* — had been published.

The city in which Drannan had spent his last days was now discovered, and his tombstone located. The Librarian of Mineral Wells, Mrs. Bess Woodruff, responded with the following information:

Capt. Wm. F. Drannan died in Mineral Wells in 1913 and is buried here in Elmwood Cemetery. He is buried beside a man whose life he once saved. This man gave the lot for the Captain's resting place and at the head of the grave there is an appropriate marker. His second wife, who survived him by several years, I knew. We were members of the same church and I recall hearing her tell interesting things about her husband and his work. . . . Capt. Drannan was always spoken of here as the foster son of Kit Carson.

Mrs. Woodruff's letter resulted in several useful avenues of information. She furnished the name of a gentleman living in Mineral Wells by name of Rev. Seba Kirkpatrick, who also had become interested in Drannan. She also requested the *Mineral Wells Index*, the local newspaper, to publish a notice requesting information about Wm. F. Drannan, which request obtained excellent results. Mrs. Woodruff wrote further on another occasion:

W. P. Cameron, Editor of the *Index*, our daily paper, and Ben F. Yeager, President of the State National Bank, are among the people who recall Capt. Drannan very distinctly. Both spoke of him as a very individual looking person who wore long hair and dressed in an old scout uniform and who sat around on the streets and sold his book. According to them no one took him nor his book very seriously. The person, however, who recalled him with real enthusiasm and who gave me interesting information was a Mr. Goodbar, a former barber who now handles real estate. Mr. Goodbar's interest in Capt. Drannan dates back to an early reading of his book, *Thirty-one Years on the Plain* — —. Here in the spring of 1911, Mr. Goodbar said, he saw the original of the picture on the flyleaf of his favorite book, sitting on the sidewalk on Oak Street with copies of that book beside him. The Captain had come here from Fort Worth to be with a Mr. Hyde, the R. W. Hyde whose life he had saved years before. He lived, while here, with Mr. Hyde at the Hyde cottage. . . . Capt. Drannan spent much of his time after meeting Mr. Goodbar, in the Crazy Barber Shop where they shaved him just for the pleasure of his company, but he would never let anyone cut his hair. Capt. Drannan died in 1913, and Mr. Hyde in 1914. The cemetery lot, its upkeep and the monument were provided by Mr. Hyde. Mrs. Drannan was here at different times until 1918. She usually stayed at the home of Mrs. W. S. McCutcheon who passed away several years ago. I recall hearing a friend of mine who visited at the McCutcheon's home at the same time that Mrs. Drannan did in 1917, said that Mrs. Drannan spoke most affectionately of her late husband and that she seemed to have held him in high esteem. . . . Mr. E. V. O'Neal and

Mr. Ernest McKinney, each remember that Capt. Drannan died here and each remember the close association of Capt. Drannan and Mr. Hyde, and thought that both of them had been scouts and that both had known Buffalo Bill. . . . As I have understood Capt. Drannan's character from talking with different parties, he was a reticent, refined sort of person.

Herein Mrs. Woodruff probably accurately portrayed Drannan as he had made himself known to the average person in Mineral Wells. She further stated that, as a young lady, she had seen Drannan in person on the streets of Mineral Wells and that he was generally carrying a few of his books which he offered for sale. She also knew Mrs. Drannan personally as they attended the same Episcopal Church.

Another friend of Drannan, Mr. J. W. Goodbar, mentioned above, of Mineral Wells, had pleasant and vivid memories of him. He proved to be an excellent source of information and wrote a very revealing portrait of Drannan:

"It has been some 36 years since I happened to come into contact with him, so I am not able to remember all that I did learn about him. Now about just how he saved the life of Mr. Hyde, that is another phase of his life that I have forgotten all about, yet I have been told just what did happen and how all that came about, but at this writing I cannot even remember anything at all in connection with the incident. Now, I did get quite well acquainted with Capt. Drannan. It all happened in this way. I had been living in Cordell, Oklahoma, and happened to come in possession of one of his books entitled, *Thirty-one Years on the Plains and in the Mountains*, hunting, scouting, and fighting Indians. I became very interested in the book.

Later I moved to Mineral Wells. That was in 1908. Then in 1911 I owned and operated the Barber Shop in the Crazy Hotel here in Mineral Wells. In the spring of 1911 I was walking from the hotel down town and noticed an old man, long hair and scout suit on, sitting by the side with a lot of books stacked by his side. I stopped and looked at him and noticed that he was selling the book that I had read in Oklahoma. I said to him, "He was quite a character, that boy Drannan, wasn't he?"

He said, "Well, I am that boy."

That interested me very much so he and I became very well acquainted. Then I invited him to come to the Barber Shop at the Crazy Hotel. He came in often. I found out that he was in hard financial condition, so I gave him all his shaves free of charge. He would not have his hair cut and I did not blame him. He told me that he was staying with a friend here in Mineral Wells and said it was Mr. Hyde. He did not tell me under what conditions he was staying with Mr. Hyde, but through different channels, I learned that he had once saved the life of Mr. Hyde, and did hear in some way how it all happened, but I just don't remember.

Mr. Drannan stayed here a while then left and went to Fort Worth. I later saw him on the streets of Fort Worth and talked to him, and he told me he was coming back to Mineral Wells, and he did. . . . He was a man that did not talk much; you had to gain his confidence to get anything out of him. That was the way I used in trying to get all the information out of him about his life; by inviting him to my shop and giving him his barber work or shaves, and doing little things or favors for him so that I would gain as much of his confidence as possible, and also I naturally felt a desire to help the old fellow any way I could, as I had learned that all his life savings was gone, and what little he received from the sale of his books and what little charity the public gave him was all that he had. But with all my efforts I did not get much out of him. He would answer anything that I asked him but would not go into details. Many times I would think of some instance that I had read about in his book, and I would ask him to tell me all about just how it happened, but I never did get him to commit himself in full details. . . . He sometimes would say that, 'the book is a little wrong on that' or, 'it is exaggerated' and so on. The old man spent many hours sitting around my barber shop. As he always attracted attention with his long hair and scout suit on, and people were always gazing on him and asking who he was, and he finally stopped coming and sitting around. I always considered that he began to notice how folks would gaze at him, and after he was out I would have many to ask who he was, but at that time it did not seem that many people had ever heard of him.

He was quite a fine character, in my opinion. I liked him very much as he was very modest and not boastful or inclined to be inquisitive or meddlesome. Yet he was friendly, and seemed to appreciate getting acquainted, but anyone getting acquainted with him had to do most of the talking, but I did notice that at times when people seemed to want to get familiar with him he would refrain from giving them much attention, unless it was some one that he well knew, or that had already gained his confidence. In other words, he just did not fall too much for strangers. That is why I had to feel my way with him and get his confidence before I could accomplish anything at all, then did not get much.

He once had a wife, and I am not sure that it was not his wife that wrote that book, but I am not confirming this.

Now I have racked my brain to try to think of some one that could give you more information about this old man than I can, but I just don't think of any, as the most of the old timers that lived here then that would perhaps be likely to know anything, are dead. However, I am glad to give you all that I know."

Mr. Goodbar's letter, together with that of Mrs. Woodruff, lifted the haze of obscurity from the character of Drannan and showed him to have a likable, congenial personality. Also, to give all credit to Drannan due him, he showed some resentment toward overstatement in his book in his replies to Mr. Goodbar,

by his remarks that the book could be a 'little wrong' or 'exaggerated'. It appeared that his book had said something which he would have been willing to recall had it been possible to do so. If others, like Mr. Goodbar, could have been located, more illuminating information might have been obtained, but as Mr. Goodbar said, most of the oldtimers who were living in Mineral Wells at the time of Drannan's residence there have been called by Father Time.

The reference to the Crazy Barber Shop in the Crazy Hotel may require some explanation. During the period of time in which the Mineral Wells vicinity was first settled, a medical water was discovered by some pioneer while digging a well. This was on the site over which the town of Mineral Wells was later built. The water was commercialized and was known as Crazy Water. In Mineral Wells a hotel was built and named the Crazy Hotel and in the hotel was located the Crazy Barber Shop. Mr. Goodbar operated this barber shop in the old days, and in this shop Mr. Drannan passed a part of his time and received his shaves gratis.

Another reference recommended by the Mineral Wells librarian was the Rev. Seba Kirkpatrick. It seemed that this gentleman, who had already become interested in Drannan before being contacted, would have some interesting facts to present. He was living in Mineral Wells. The Rev. Kirkpatrick reported surprising information. The general attitude and style of Drannan's books were explained by the material which had been given him years before and which he relayed in May, 1948. He wrote:

"Your letter came yesterday. In reference to Capt. Drannan, I will say—I found his widow one cold winter day living in an old tumble down house. She was sick—and I was hunting up the poor and the sick. She was 85 years old and nearly deaf. She was highly educated and a typical New England Yankee. I found her most interesting. She was responsible for both the books you mentioned as Drannan had no education. She married him in the far west after his work with the Government had ended. He owned a hotel in Seattle, Washington, which burned with all his valuable Indian relics. She wrote his books and they traveled together and sold them, and he gave his Indian stories and took collections for a livelihood. His widow had married again and her second husband was also dead. . . . Drannan died in Mineral Wells in 1913. It states on his tomb that he was a Texas Ranger. . . ."

Here was suddenly explained how Drannan's books came into existence. He had reached a point in life where he needed a means to provide a living for himself and wife; therefore, he

and his wife agreed to produce a book. Since Drannan was uneducated, he could produce no book. But with an educated wife and his alleged experiences a book was possible. Apparently then, they had combined their resources and produced the resulting narratives.

In a personal interview the Rev. Kirkpatrick stated that he had been the Methodist Minister at Gorman, Texas, in the year 1928 and later. In that year he accidentally found the widow of Drannan in Gorman. She was ill and in want when Kirkpatrick found her. She had married again in about 1918 to a Mr. W. L. Brown, whose home was in Gorman. This Mr. Brown died in 1925.

Mrs. Drannan-Brown told Rev. Kirkpatrick about Drannan and his alleged experiences with Kit Carson and that group of mountain men. She showed him a copy of the book, *Thirty-one Years on the Plains and in the Mountains*, and permitted him to read it, but he had to go repeatedly to her home to complete it as she would not let the book be taken from her possession. She was born back east and appeared to be well educated. She had met Drannan out west and married him. She made it a point to mention that while married to Drannan she had made him a scouts suit from buckskin which he frequently wore, and after his death it was placed in a museum in Denver, Colorado.

This buckskin suit incident was confirmed by Mr. LeRoy Hafen, mentioned above as being the Executive Director of the Colorado State Historical Society, which society has offices in the State Museum in Denver. Mr. Hafen wrote:

"We have here the buckskin suit and broad-brimmed hat which Drannan wore in his late years, when he was selling copies of his book."

Mrs. Drannan-Brown's story about the buckskin suit is thus definitely verified. Mr. Hafen did not state that the suit was on display at the time of his writing, but another coordinator^{5A}, in describing a visit to the Colorado State Museum stated that the Drannan display was not in evidence. He interrogated the gentleman at the information desk, who seemed to have a recollection of the display, and learned that it had evidently been stored in the vault to make room for other displays. It was common practice to replace one exhibit with another from time to time on account of limited space preventing the display of all exhibits at the same time. Mr. E. C. McMechen, the Curator of the Museum, later wrote that the suit would soon be on display again.

He stated that the suit was presented to the museum many years ago by one Charles F. Semple, who lived in Denver at that time and was an old friend of Drannan.

Rev. Kirkpatrick stated that Mrs. Drannan-Brown had the appearance of being sincere and enthusiastic about the books she and Drannan had produced and he had no reason to doubt her word in any of her statements. She informed him that since Drannan was entirely uneducated, she had written the books after the dictation of Drannan. Later she and Drannan traveled and they lectured—or rather Drannan told his stories—and they sold his books and took up collections at such meetings. In this way they made their living for some years.

At Elmwood Cemetery the gravestones of Drannan and Hyde were pointed out by Kirkpatrick. They were both enclosed within the same concrete curbing and he stated that the reason for the enclosure around the two stones was because Hyde had provided the burial place and the stone for Drannan on account of the fact that years before out on the frontier Drannan had saved the life of Mr. Hyde. It was the same story that came from many other sources. Kirkpatrick later met an old man who had known Drannan in person and who recalled that Drannan saved Hyde in an Indian fight, but he did not recall any further details.

On the headstone of Drannan is stated:

In Memory of Capt. Wm. F. Drannan—January 30, 1832—April 23, 1913. U. S. Scout of the Indian War of the Northwest and a Texas Ranger.

On the headstone of Hyde is stated:

R. W. Hyde—Nov. 22, 1840—April 18, 1914—His Good Deeds Live.

Several months later the Rev. Kirkpatrick relayed another interesting bit of information:

"I found Bill Lewis from Arizona this week. He was visiting relatives here. He knew Drannan in Deming, New Mexico, in 1907 and after. Drannan made frequent visits to Deming. He told of Jim Upton, a prominent cowman of that period. Upton said that Buffalo Bill brought his Wild West show to Deming in 1912. Upton saw Drannan meet Buffalo Bill at the train and they hugged each other in greeting. They had fought Indians together. The next day Buffalo Bill put Drannan on his Deadwood Stage as guest of honor and paraded the town. Bill Lewis left Mineral Wells in 1902 and has been in the west since that time."

Apparently this man, Drannan, could make friends and hold them. He claimed in his book, *Thirty-one Years* — —, that he was acquainted with Buffalo Bill in the earlier years and related the circumstances. Upton's description of the meeting in Deming seemed to confirm the acquaintance. Ring up credit for Drannan.

The Rev. Kirkpatrick had located Mrs. Drannan-Brown in Gorman, Texas. Search for the Browns in that town among the business men did not reveal much information, except that one suggested that a certain "Buckshot" Brown be located and questioned. "Buckshot" was located by his stepson and he turned out to be Mr. W. B. Brown and immediately stated that Mrs. Drannan had been his stepmother. She had married his father about 1917, he said at Weatherford, Texas, and they had lived at Gorman. Mr. Brown, a man of seventy-five years, stated that he was not living at Gorman at the time Mrs. Drannan-Brown had lived there and he did not have much information about her. His younger sister, Mrs. Early Hall of Woodson, Texas, he said had taken care of Mrs. Drannan-Brown during the last seven years of her life and could furnish more information about the step-mother than anyone.

Mrs. Hall of Woodson stated that her father, W. L. Brown, married Mrs. Drannan at Weatherford about 1917, and this was Mrs. Drannan's third marriage. She was born back east in 1850. Her first name was Belle. Mrs. Hall stated that the Drannans made their living by going about selling the book, *Thirty-one Years on the Plains* — —, and by giving marksmanship exhibitions. She said also that the Drannans wrote a play but it was never published, and that it was in the hands of her daughter who lived in the Texas Panhandle.

Mrs. Drannan-Brown had always expressed a great respect for Drannan, so said Mrs. Hall and stated that he always kept his word to her. She told of having made the buckskin suit, fringed and beaded, for Drannan and that it was in a museum in Denver on display. She was a fascinating conversationalist but repeated her material. The Drannans worked around Albuquerque, and at Amarillo, Hereford, and other towns in that general vicinity. Mrs. Hall also furnished a picture of Mrs. Drannan-Brown that was taken about 1925.

Mrs. Drannan-Brown was ill during 1928 and 1929. It was in 1929 that Mrs. Hall, who was at that time living out in the Panhandle of Texas, went to Gorman and took the step-mother

to live in her home. It was in Moore County, not far from Dumas. She cared for Mrs. Drannan-Brown for seven years. By this time Mrs. Drannan was old and feeble and her mind wandered back to former years and she liked to discuss those times. She spoke often of Drannan and frequently made mention of incidents in his books, which she had written, and discussed them in a familiar manner. Those incidents, perhaps, had become very real to her. She had pictures, souvenirs, and guns, that had belonged to Drannan. She died on October 9, 1937, and was buried in Palo Duro Cemetery in Moore County, Texas.

Mrs. Charles Maley of Woodson, and daughter of Mrs. Early Hall, furnished a clipping taken from the *Houston Chronicle* dated October 11, 1910, this same article being mentioned above. She also exhibited Mr. Drannan's watch chain which she was keeping as a souvenir.

Apparently Drannan was a good shot with his guns. Mrs. Hall mentioned that Drannan gave marksmanship exhibitions with his guns on some occasions, and also W. B. Brown stated that he saw one of Drannan's exhibitions in Waco, Texas, in the year 1911 or thereabout. The exhibition was given in a street and at the end of the affair Drannan took up a collection. Revolvers were used. He was skillful in the use of his guns and he showed how well he could shoot. He also exhibited his scars received in Indian fights.

The Bureau of Vital Statistics at Austin provided a death certificate of Mr. R. W. Hyde and this instrument showed the name of O. R. Hyde, Hastings, Iowa.

O. R. Hyde being the son of R. W. Hyde of Mineral Wells, was able to furnish information that fitted in well with other links of information received from different sources. In reply to the inquiry as to how, when, and where, Drannan saved the life of R. W. Hyde, he replied:

"I do not know. There evidently was a reason why my father was interested in Drannan because, when I related the story of his book to my father, he asked me to send Drannan to him if I ever ran across him."

As to why Drannan moved to Mineral Wells in the spring of 1911, Mr. O. R. Hyde explained:

"My father saw in a Fort Worth paper where Drannan had asked for relief, so he sent and had Drannan and his wife brought to Mineral Wells where he could take care of them."

In this manner it was learned how Drannan was provided for during his last days, and how he came to be living with the Hyde family. A friend of long standing, Mr. Hyde took him and his wife in and provided for the two of them. Drannan had come a long way since the days when he fought the wild Indians on the western plains. He was now close to eighty years of age and could no longer make his own living. His pride must have suffered intensely during those latter years, especially after he learned that even his books would not provide him with a living.

Mr. O. R. Hyde further stated that his father and Drannan had met in the early days out west before 1880. He could not say definitely that Drannan and Carson had ever been acquainted, but did recall hearing his father mention Carson many times in connection with Drannan. He thought his father was acquainted with Carson because Carson was mentioned so often. He had met Drannan on the streets of Fort Worth selling his books, and Drannan was living in Fort Worth at that time. He continued to live there until the time of his move to Mineral Wells which seems to have been in the spring of 1911. O. R. Hyde said his father was engaged in the cattle business when he first met Drannan, in the vicinity of Utah and Montana. He sometimes drove cattle from Texas to the northwest, and also drove cattle from Utah and Montana to Iowa arriving in Iowa in the fall of the year when he sold them to be fed out for beef. In reply to an inquiry as to whether Drannan or R. W. Hyde were ever engaged in scouting with wagon trains, or with troops, O. R. Hyde stated:

"From what I can remember my father telling me, Drannan was with troops. However, my father drove wagon trains hauling freight from Nebraska City to Denver in an early day. I have heard my father say that he bought cattle around Salt Lake, and do know that he was in the cattle business in Montana, and I am under the impression that Drannan was with him at that time."

Mr. O. R. Hyde's information paralleled the narration in Drannan's book, *Thirty-one Years on the Plains* — —, on page 397. An incident was related, which, according to the narrative, happened in the year 1864. Drannan wrote:

During my stay in Salt Lake City (1864) there came in from Virginia City (Montana) a young man by the name of Richard Hyde, to buy cattle. Mr. Boone recommended him to me as being a fine young man and very shrewd for his age. After having a little acquaintance with him and he had told me of his business, also what profit there was in it, he and I formed a partnership for the purpose

of buying cattle and driving them to Virginia City. We bought one hundred and ninety-two head of all sizes and by the help of two other men, we drove them through, losing only five head, which was considered good luck. We stopped about ten miles below town, and after setting a price on our cattle, I remained with them while Mr. Hyde went to look for buyers. He was gone nearly a week, and when he returned he had sold nearly all the cattle. We were well pleased with the result of our venture, and I am told Mr. Hyde kept the business up for several years until he had made an independent fortune, and I am told at this writing—that he is somewhere in Iowa doing a large banking business.

As soon as the cattle were all delivered and we had settled up, Mr. Hyde and I struck for Salt Lake City, he to buy more cattle, and I on my way to California.

The above extract from Drannan's book was submitted to Mr. O. R. Hyde, and in reply to an inquiry as to whether he had ever heard his father mention this incident, he replied:

"Yes, I believe this to be the case recalled."

Score one, for Drannan.

Shortly after Rev. Kirkpatrick wrote stating that the headstone of Drannan indicated that he had been a Texas Ranger, the head office of the Texas Rangers was contacted for the purpose of verifying the statement. This office is located at Camp Mabry, Austin, Texas. Mr. Bob Massengale, the Chief Clerk, investigated the records. He searched the records back to the date of the beginning of the organization. He was experienced in the searching of those records and knew how to look for any kind of information needed from them. After making a thorough search, no trace of Drannan was found anywhere. He next phoned another state office in Austin to learn if the records of that office made mention of Drannan, and again no record of Drannan was discovered.

To have this intimation of membership in the Texas Ranger organization on Drannan's stone was pleasing to someone or it would not have been there. Perhaps Drannan, himself, liked the idea, or perhaps, since his wife had been his main advertising agent, the idea had come from Mrs. Drannan, who had written the idea into the second book, *Chief of Scouts*, published in 1910. At least it looked well on the stone.

On Friday morning, November 19, 1948, another Drannan newspaper article³³ appeared in an Amarillo, Texas, newspaper which had reprinted the article from the *Childress Index* of Childress, Texas. The article recited an account of Drannan and McKee passing through a settlement, located on the site of pres-

ent day Childress, on their way to Colorado after their Indian fighting in Texas in 1857 and 1858, as narrated in Drannan's second book, — — *Chief of Scouts*, published in 1910.

As shown elsewhere in this writing, Mr. Drannan's first book, *Thirty-one Years on the Plains* — —, showed him to be up on the headwaters of the Missouri River in 1857 and 1858 with Carson and Bridger.

But how strange that this man Drannan should come into the papers again as late as 1948, just 38 years after his last article in the *Houston Chronicle*.

CHAPTER 5

THE LATTER DAYS OF DRANNAN

The earliest incident of Drannan concerning which we have acceptable proof is the meeting with Richard Hyde in 1864 and their trip together to Virginia City, Montana, with cattle. As stated above this incident was related in the first book of Drannan and is supported by statement from the son of Richard Hyde. No further tangible evidence of his actions was uncovered until 1887 in which year Drannan stated that he went to Seattle and purchased the hotel. Although investigation revealed that he did not purchase the hotel, he did make the trip and was located in Seattle at the time he said he was there as proven by the documents received, from the county auditor of King County, in which county the city of Seattle was located, and from the Washington Title Insurance Company of Seattle. He was definitely interested in property there, and his location was definitely established during the period of 1887 to 1890.

During the period from the time of his business deal with Mr. Hyde in 1864 to the time of his arrival at Seattle in 1887, Drannan's business of alleged scouting and Indian fighting gradually dwindled to nothing. His story follows the trend of the times. The Indians made their last stand at 'Dobe Walls in 1864 and 1874, at Sand Creek in 1866, at the Washita in 1868, at Custer's Fight in 1876, and at other places. The Indians in many cases gave a good account of themselves, but in most cases were whipped and when they finally accepted the reservation boundaries, they moved out of the picture as far as frontier men like Drannan and his kind were concerned. Therefore, scouts and their like were no longer required for their former duties. They found themselves useless and without their usual livelihood.

Still another severe blow was dealt them at the same time. Many of these men maintained a buffalo-hide traffic with the Indians. The situation developed that during the time that the Indians were disappearing, the buffalo herds were being shot out of existence. The white men organized small outfits and went on the plains solely for the purpose of killing buffalo for the hides alone.

As late as 1874 the second battle of 'Dobe Walls took place. This was an attempt by the Indians to eliminate a group of white men who had apparently built their fort on Indian territory and

were killing the buffalo for their hides. This business encroached upon the Indian's food supply, since the buffalo was the portable warehouse of meat for the Indians, and they did what they could to preserve it, but did not succeed. By 1880, practically all buffalo was gone from the plains and the free-lance frontier men had to look for other means to make a living because there were no more hides.

Some of these men began picking up buffalo bones and selling them for a living, and many did quite well for a time. Others tried ranching. Drannan stated that he tried ranching several times. But while he stated that he bought land for that purpose, no supporting evidence has been found to show that he owned land. He could have rented land for that purpose.

His actions during this period were vague until his arrival at Seattle. He was there in 1890 and he was then 58 years of age, and married to Anna Drannan. No mention was ever made in his book that he was married, but the bill-of-sale for a one-half interest in his Riverside Restaurant has the signature of his wife, Anna Drannan on it. No evidence could be obtained as to where they met or as to how long they had been married.

Evidently Drannan tried to maintain a living in Seattle after the fire of June 6, 1889, as the Washington Title Insurance Company of Seattle has stated that he executed a chattel mortgage and caused his name to be signed as Wm. F. Drannan, Real Estate Agent. This would indicate that he had been dealing in property in Seattle, and in his book he stated that he lost money in real estate deals in that city.

For approximately nine years after his Seattle experience there seemed to be no trace of Drannan's wanderings. But in 1899 he showed up in Chicago, and in the Chicago *Inter Ocean* newspaper an article on Drannan appeared under the caption, "OF OLD SCOUTS", in which Drannan told of his experiences in the Modoc Indian War during which he captured Captain Jack, the Modoc Chief. He also mentioned other incidents which formed a part of his book, *Thirty-one Years on the Plains and in the Mountains*, which book was first published in Chicago in 1900. The same article was published in the *Denver Times* in February, 1899, with acknowledgments that it was taken from the Chicago *Inter Ocean*. These articles could easily be construed to be of advertising nature since Drannan's book was to appear the following year. It is not known in how many places this article appeared, but it would seem to be good business to have it appear

in as many places as possible, provided this method of pre-advertisement were going to result in sales of the book that was to come.

When Drannan appeared in Chicago in 1899, two important events in his life had taken place. He probably had the completed material for his book with him and he had a different wife. In his book he had stated that he was living temporarily in Moscow, Idaho, as he was writing the book and the preface in the book is dated 1899, so apparently he had completed the book in the year 1899. It is known that he had a different wife, because it was this wife that had the name of Belle that really wrote the book, as was learned by Rev. Kirkpatrick when he discovered Belle in Gorman, Texas, in 1928. It is not known what happened to Anna, the first wife, nor when and where he met his second wife, Belle. Since Belle Drannan had literary tendencies and actually wrote the book for Drannan, probably largely from his dictation, she would have had to have married Drannan early enough in the 1890's to permit completion of the book by 1899. It would all depend on how fast they worked.

Since the book, *Thirty-one Years on the Plains* — — was published by the Rhodes & McClure Publishing Company of Chicago in 1900, it is assumed that Drannan and wife immediately started peddling books. The first pages of the book revealed that it was copyrighted by the Rhodes & McClure Company. This might give rise to the supposition that Drannan traded his MS to the publishing company for the right to be furnished with as many books as he could sell, or some similar deal. The successor to the Rhodes & McClure Publishing Company advised that one hundred editions of Drannan's book, *Thirty-one Years* — —, had been published in approximately the first ten years after 1900. This same statement was made on the advertisement cover of the Drannan books after the year 1910. It is interesting to note that during the same period of time in which the publishing company was selling so many of the Drannan books, the author was steadily trying to sell his own books to make a living for himself and wife, and was succeeding so well that in 1911 he was forced to put an advertisement in a Fort Worth paper and make a charitable request for public assistance.

For a few years after 1900, there is no trace of Drannan and his wife except in a general way. Mrs. Early Hall, the step-daughter of Mrs. Drannan after 1917, stated that the Drannans went about the country selling the books, holding meetings and

telling western stories, taking up collections, and giving marksmanship exhibitions and sometimes selling Indian jewelry. Drannan was a good shot with the revolvers, as verified by 'Buckshot' Brown, step-son of Mrs. Drannan-Brown, who saw one of Drannan's marksmanship exhibitions at Waco, Texas, in 1911. It was mentioned that the Drannans went as far west as California on their tours, and also worked around Albuquerque, Amarillo, and at Hereford, and also in places in New Mexico. They also worked in Mineral Wells, Waco, Fort Worth, and Houston. They probably worked in a number of states not mentioned, and no doubt in hundreds of towns not mentioned.

In 1907 Drannan was in Deming, New Mexico, and was there frequently until 1912 when he had the meeting with Buffalo Bill, which meeting gave proof to Drannan's statement in his book that he was acquainted with Buffalo Bill.

In 1900 Drannan was 68 years of age and since he continually went on exhibition tours after that time, it is evident that he had good health. It is not known how long he continued these operations, but it seemed that sales of the book did not continue to be satisfactory, and in 1910 another book appeared under the title of *Capt. Wm. F. Drannan, Chief of Scouts*. It was much shorter than the book of 1900 and was said to be a sequel to the first book, although after perusal it was found to contain no sequence from the first book. The accuracy of this book has been discussed above. One reason for this second book was the fact that it was thought that a book with fewer pages might sell better. The first book had 657 pages and the second had 407 pages.

By this time the curtain of age was being lowered on Drannan. He was a poor man and had to keep working for a living in old age. No doubt his second book was a great disappointment, and this was not good for him. The going had been hard for him ever since the Indians and the buffalo had been eliminated. His regular line of work was gone and all the jobs that he tried in his latter days were new and mostly in the line of experiment to see if he could make a living for himself and wife. Apparently he had been more or less short of money since 1889, the time of the big fire in Seattle, and since he could no longer make his living by sitting in the saddle all day long, he had to use his wits and work at any job that showed up. Such a condition is wearing on an old man. For many frontier relics like Drannan there was nothing left for them to do when they reached old age. Many of

them had no relatives and no near friends, and there was no Social Security nor Old Age Pension in those days. Throughout all those years since the fire Drannan had showed fine courage and tenacity in keeping up some program of working for a living.

In 1911 he was 79 and apparently felt that he had done his part in life, and that he was entitled to a bit of rest before joining his former friends of earlier years. In that year he put an appeal for public assistance in a newspaper, and this appeal reached the ears of his old friend and partner R. W. Hyde, who was then living in Mineral Wells, Texas. Hyde took Drannan and his wife into his home and cared for them. This was the rest Drannan needed so much.

However, Drannan was still able to get around and go places, and he did so. After he moved to Mineral Wells he made trips to Fort Worth to sell his books. It seemed that he continued to try to sell them as long as he lived. And in 1912 he went to Deming, New Mexico, and met his old friend Buffalo Bill when his circus stopped there. Let no one suppose that Drannan was the type of person that imposed on friends, or that had no friends. He did have friends and they liked him. Some of his friends had money, some had fame, and others had friendship for him. Very few people were more famous than Buffalo Bill in his day, and Buffalo Bill was so glad to see Drannan that he took Drannan in an embrace and had him as the guest of honor in the circus parade at Deming. Also, as stated above, Drannan's old friend, Hyde, was glad to take Drannan in and feed him and his wife as long as he lived.

After Drannan moved to Mineral Wells he made many acquaintances there although he was personally a reticent person. Many of these acquaintances interviewed recalled that he was often seen on the streets dressed in a scout suit of buckskin-fringed and bead-trimmed. Mrs. Belle H. Drannan had made this suit for him to wear while selling his books, it being a method of attracting attention of possible purchasers of books. He did not always wear this scout suit. Mr. Cameron, the Mineral Wells *Index* editor, recalled having seen him in a business suit. He had seen Drannan many times in Mineral Wells, and said people did not pay much attention to him as he was just an ex-frontier man and such men were more or less common. He was feeble in his walking, squarely built, and always wore a coat. He was well liked by all.

Miss Minnie Tygrett, who lived next door to the Hydes and Drannans, recalled the story that Drannan had saved the life of Hyde but did not recall the details. She was acquainted with both the Hydes and the Drannans.

There was once a mineral water fountain in Mineral Wells by the name of the "Carlsbad Fountain" and during a part of the period between 1911 and 1913 one of the attendants at this fountain was Mr. Ernest McKinney. He had purchased one of Drannan's books on a train in 1906 between Denver and Forth Worth. Later he was much interested to see the author of the book come in frequently to the Carlsbad Fountain with three books strapped together and sit day after day at a table and offer his books for sale.

Mr. Joe O. Naylor, President of THE NAYLOR COMPANY, of San Antonio, reported on Drannan in the following manner:

"I personally, well remember seeing Captain Drannan when he was selling his books on street corners in San Antonio along about 1912 or 1913. At that time my brother purchased one of his books which I eagerly read during the winter of 1913. He also became one of my heroes, and later when I read the story of Kit Carson, I, too, was confused when I could not find anything in it about Captain Drannan."

Mr. Boyce Ditto, long resident of Mineral Wells, recalled that Mr. Hyde was well fixed financially and was quite able to help his friends. He also stated that Mr. Hyde came to Mineral Wells for his health. Mr. Hyde's house, where he kept Drannan and his wife, was a cottage and a few years after his death it burned down.

All of those with whom Drannan was acquainted were unanimous in saying that he was a likable person, modest in nature, and courteous to all. The question arises then as to how such an agreeable person could write unauthentic books and claim them to be true.

The answer is—he did not write them—he did not mean for them to be historically accurate. He meant for them to contain as much of his life's experiences as he had to give, and then in addition, he had to write enough of something to build up a narrative that would be interesting enough to sell to the public in order to make a living. It seemed that his wife, Mrs. Belle H. Drannan, took what experiences he had to offer, and then borrowed from other biographies material enough to fill out a salable narrative. She was educated and probably read many of the frontier histories and had the material at hand from which to

choose the incidents suitable to include in the narratives that she wrote in her husband's name. What she really wrote were books of fiction based on facts, and gave credit for all the incidents mentioned to Drannan. This would have been all right had she written books that were represented to be fiction. But the preface of each book stated that the narrative therein was true, and it was this statement that created the mistake.

It was not intended to intimate that Drannan himself was free of blame for all the claims made, for even if he did not write an incident that claimed the other man's deed, he did know that it was included. But Drannan like so many other men of his period and calling, was of the show type in nature. He liked the glory of noble and brave deeds. He liked to see himself displayed in newspaper articles. He also liked the distinction of having had a book or two written about himself.

If he was on the plains as much as he claimed to have been, he could have caught this spirit from the Indians, many of whom were great boasters. Also, many of the plainsmen of his day with whom he must have necessarily associated were most probably of the boastful type. The Indians made much of counting their 'coups.' It was a regular duty with them, and it amounted to their method of transmitting their history to their posterity. The brave would go out and execute a brave deed, or one that he thought was brave, and then 'count coup' on it. This 'counting coup' consisted of impressing the deed upon his own memory with such firmness that he could retain it clearly in mind and repeat it to his fellow braves and to his squaw and children, and thereby impress them greatly with prowess. The greater the number of coups he could store up and recount, the greater brave he was. The Indians would also repeat their deeds to the whites, and soon the whites were counting coups in order to keep up with their Indian acquaintances.

Kit Carson counted coups with his Indian friends. Counting coups was the regular thing among the mountain men and plains men of that period. But the Indian was at a great disadvantage in that business. It was the Indian rule that in order to count a bona fide coup, it had to be witnessed by two other Indians. The whites had no such handicap. They counted their own coups and used whatever coups they desired. By this system some whites accumulated a most marvelous store of coups of very select nature.

It was under this influence and in this spirit that the Drannan

books were written. Drannan included other coups with his in order to make his story long enough. But his reason was insecurity and probably hunger. On that account he can be forgiven for everything except the statements in the prefaces. Statements of historical nature, no matter how insignificant, can stand correction if inaccuracy appears.

Time ended for Drannan in 1913. He died on April 23 of that year at the home of Mr. Hyde in Mineral Wells. The Mineral Wells *Index* issued the following notice of his death:

April 23, 1913. Capt. Wm. F. Drannan died at his home, 512 West Reynolds Street. The funeral will be at the residence at 10:30 AM tomorrow, conducted by Rev. C. R. Crittenden of Weatherford, after which the remains will be buried at the Elmo.

'Elmo' was the local expression used to indicate the Elmwood Cemetery. Mr. Hyde furnished the burial plot, defrayed all expenses, and placed the headstone for his old friend. He first took his friend in and furnished him with food and shelter, and later provided his final resting place. And then, almost exactly a year later, on April 18, 1914, Mr. Hyde, himself, died. He had one thing more to do for Drannan. He provided Drannan with a friendly companion throughout all eternity by causing himself to be buried by his side. And there they rest today; both grave stones side by side and enclosed within the same concrete curbing. Mr. Hyde had now done all he could to repay Drannan for any previous possible favor. On Mr. Hyde's stone there is the simple inscription, thus—HIS GOOD DEEDS LIVE.

Drannan is not the only character that has made fictitious claims to an association with the famous frontier hero, Carson. A number of others have written books and articles in which claims were made to an association with Carson, but proof is lacking and their narratives are not considered authentic.

Carson started out as an apprentice to a saddle maker in Franklin, Missouri, and at the end of his life he had the rank of a Brevet General. He did not do so badly. His integrity and reputation were such, and he was so well respected and liked by all, that it was only natural for many of the men of the frontier to want to claim an acquaintance or an association with him. And this many of them unrighteously did. But they gained little by it, and they are all in the happy hunting grounds now where coups are worthless.

Peace be to all of them.

REFERENCES

- 1A. Mrs. Lora H. Steele, Librarian of Woodruff Memorial Library, La Junta, Colorado. Mrs. Steele kindly arranged and conducted the interview with Mrs. Lupe Carson, the widow of Kit Carson II and daughter-in-law of Kit Carson I. Mrs. Lupe Carson now lives in La Junta.
- 2A. Mrs. Rogers Paratt, Managing Director of the California Historical Society, San Francisco, California. Mrs. Parratt furnished the valuable references to Bancroft concerning the Modoc Indian War.
- 3A. Mrs. Ora M. Smith, Palo Pinto, Texas, the grand-daughter of Capt. Joel McKee.
- 4A. Mr. E. W. Winkler, former Head Librarian, University of Texas, Austin, Texas. Mr. Winkler aided in this project to the extent of pointing out the research procedure that finally led to the address of the defunct publishing company that first published the Drannan books. The successor of the defunct company revealed the location of the last residence of Drannan, from which location came many clues leading to pertinent information.
- 5A. Mr. H. A. Sherman, Denver, Colorado, a relative of the same Lieut Wm. Tecumseh Sherman that made friends with Kit Carson at Los Angeles in 1847, and later, as General Sherman, led the Union troops across Georgia in the Civil War. Tecumseh Sherman befriended Carson in many ways, even to the extent of sending one of Carson's sons to college after Carson died. It is a beautiful coincidence that a later Sherman from the same clan should appear and be willing to assist in the elimination of any encroachment on Carson's fame. It is in keeping with the early Sherman friendliness toward Carson.
- 6A. Edward F. Witsell, Major General, the Adjutant General, Department of the Army, Office of the Adjutant General, Washington, D. C., conducted search of Army records for possible enlistment of Drannan. No such record of enlistment was found.

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE

Taken from the Denver *Times*, February 11, 1899, which newspaper borrowed from the Chicago *Inter Ocean*.

OF OLD SCOUTS

Major Drannan is the Last of a Notable List

He Was Kit Carson's Mate

A Veteran Indian Fighter and Guide on Chicago Trail

Also Captured Captain Jack

After half a Century of Outdoor Life a City

Like Chicago is too Small for Him.

Major Wm. F. Drannan, known to plainsmen as "Young Kit Carson", is in Chicago. He is the last of the famous Indian Scouts, and the last of the hunters and trappers common in the Rocky Mountains fifty years ago, says the *Inter Ocean*.

Major Drannan is the genuine article. He is an Indian scout with no more frills in his makeup than his innate love of the picturesque demands. Lithe and agile and brown, 6 feet 2 inches in his socks he looks like a fighter of redskins copied from a Kit Carson romance. Colonel Cody is more spectacular, but less picturesque and true to life. Major Drannan is every inch an Indian scout today. He is not, like Colonel Cody, grown civilized and fat. He eats bear meat and drinks water and sleeps on an elkskin bed.

Major Drannan is not afraid of Chicago. He carries a knife with which he has scalped thirty-five Indians after killing them in fair fights, and he does not know what fear feels like. He squares his broad shoulders and tackles State street and its crowds anew every day. Still, he admits that it is all very queer.

CAPTOR OF CAPTAIN JACK

It was Major Drannan who captured Capt. Jack, the Chief of the Modocs, in 1873, and put an end to the Modoc war. The conflict between the U. S. Troops and the Modoc Indians broke out during one of Major Drannan's periodical attempts to 'settle down' and farm. Couriers dashed up to his ranch, their horses covered with foam, and brought the news that Capt. Jack and his Modocs had gone on the war path.

"I have always sympathized with Capt. Jack," says the major, "because he was attacked first without provocation. He and his people were catching fish in Lost River, to keep the squaws and children from starving when a body of troops, led by a hot-headed officer, fired on them."

The whole settlement was soon in a state of great excitement. The Indians killed all the defenseless ranchers they could and then fled to the lava beds of Idaho* and entrenched themselves in a cave. Somebody had to ride to Jacksonville, a hundred miles away and warn the town and bring re-enforcements to the regular troops. Nobody cared to undertake it. Major Drannan saddled Black Bess and started at sundown. All night long the sharp eyes of the scout and the sagacious nose of his pet mare picked out the trail as unerringly as a bloodhound. Before sunrise the major rode into Jacksonville, and told the sheriff to gather a strong posse, as Capt. Jack was on the war path and murdering settlers by the score. General Wheaton, in command of the regular army forces stationed at Linkville, sent for Major Drannan.

ON TRAIL OF THE MODOCs

"Drannan," he said, "we haven't got a practical scout in the entire command. I want you to start in at once and organize a scouting force to suit yourself."

"I'll let you know by 9 o'clock in the morning, general," is the way Drannan tells the story. "In the morning I was at the general's tent mounted on Black Bess and ready to go to work Indian hunting again. We had to scout a strip of country about forty miles long every day in front of where Capt. Jack and his men were entrenched in the lava beds for the officers feared an uprising of the Utes as well. Not an Indian showed his head. Their stronghold was nothing more than a big cave in the lava rock, but it was absolutely secure. There was only one place to get in, a narrow passage but there were numerous rifle holes on the east and south sides. One day General Wheaton said to me:

"'Drannan, I'm going to take Capt. Jack by storm. What do you think of it?'

"I said, 'General, you'll never take Capt. Jack so long as his ammunition lasts, for his warriors have the same kind of guns that you have and all the Indians have to do is to stand there and shoot your men as fast as they can come.'

*Idaho was so stated, but it is incorrect. The lava beds are in northern California and southern Oregon.

"General Wheaton went ahead, however, and the whole command, backed by howitzers, turned loose on Jack for three days. Sixty soldiers were killed, but the Indians did not appear to have been singed. General Canby then took command.

"Your chief scout tells me Capt. Jack had sixty-three warriors in that fight," said General Canby to General Wheaton.

"Yes," replied Wheaton.

"And you had 1500," said Canby, "and you got whipped. There must have been bad management somehow." And then General Canby tried taking Capt. Jack by storm himself and lost 100 men.

A conference was then arranged between General Canby, his chaplain, Colonel Thomas, two interpreters and Captain Jack, all without arms. Before it was held Major Drannan went to Colonel Miller, Canby's aid and said:

"Colonel, if the general ever goes to that council with Capt. Jack he will never come out alive."

MURDER OF GENERAL CANBY

The major repeated his warnings again and again, but Chaplain Thomas said, "The Lord will protect us," and General Canby laughed at the idea of treachery.

"I determined that I would see that council," says Major Drannan, "because it seemed to me they were showing absolute ignorance of Indian nature, and I felt sure Jack meant no good."

Major Drannan and a trusty scout in the company crept out on a bluff over the canon and waited all night before the date of the historical meeting. At 9 o'clock that morning the fog lifted on a beautiful day, and the scouts trained their eyes toward the glade a half mile in front of Jack's stronghold, where the meeting was to take place. It was over a mile from the army camp, and had been selected by the Modocs themselves.

"I could see Jack and another Indian waiting," says Drannan. "Pretty soon, looking through my field glasses, I saw General Canby, Colonel Thomas, George Meacham and his squaw coming through a little opening in the trees. They tied their horses and walked slowly across the open, in the direction where Capt. Jack was standing. Every few steps General Canby would look back, apparently to see if he was being followed. They shook hands with Capt. Jack. The Indian chief dropped his blanket from his shoulders to the ground, and suddenly turned and picked it up. This was the signal for an attack. There was a roar and a smoke

instantly from all the rocks around. General Canby fell in his tracks. Colonel Thomas ran ten steps and tumbled, as did George Meacham. Meacham's squaw only, escaped." After that more attention was paid to the advice of the chief scout. Major Drannan had the cave surrounded by a double ring of guards, knowing very well that the supply of horse meat, on which the Indians were living, was about exhausted. Soon he found that Jack was sending the squaws and children away to save food. Every Indian that attempted to escape was captured by Drannan and his men. They all said, "We heap hungry."

HOW JACK WAS CAUGHT

One night Drannan, scouting as usual, crossed the trail of three Indians. One track was quite large and long, a second smaller, and one quite small.

"Capt. Jack, his squaw and their little girl are running away," said Drannan to Black Bess. "They are starving, and they've started out to Clear Creek to catch fish."

The major had been in the saddle twenty-four hours, but he never hesitated. He took up the trail and followed it as rapidly as he could push along. Across miles and miles of gravel ridge there was nothing to go by except sometimes a bent twig or a pebble turned by the feet. Finally the major looked down in the valley from the top of a high ridge, and caught sight of the three Indians. He tremblingly put his field glasses to his eyes, and, sure enough, it was Capt. Jack, his squaw and little girl.

"Where are you going, Jack?" asked the major as he rode up to the big chief who had been causing all the trouble.

"Heap hungry," said Jack, dejectedly. "Guess go Clear Creek catch fish."

A few hours later the old scout rode into camp with his three prisoners. The capture put an end to the Modoc War.

BEGAN WITH KIT CARSON

Drannan started on his career from St. Louis, with Kit Carson in 1847. He was a boy 15 years old then and soon afterward he killed his first Indian in South Park, Colorado. Carson and another trapper started out, leaving young Drannan in charge of the dugout, with orders to kill a deer and cook it for them by night. The boy had heard old Kit say that if the Indians came prowling around they would rob the traps and destroy the camp.

While carrying the deer home on his shoulder he spied three Indians. With no idea of the danger, Drannan blazed away and shot one of the redskins. Then he lay down quietly on his back behind a log and reloaded his rifle. Then he fired at one of the two remaining Indians who were looking cautiously around, and knocked him over. The third fled with a wild whoop. The boy secured the two scalps as best he could and hung them over the door of the dugout. He thought he would say nothing, but wait and see Kit Carson brush his head against them as he entered camp that night. The two old trappers were astonished at the boy's story and voted him a full-fledged warrior.

MEETING WITH BUFFALO BILL

Drannan gave a stirring account of his first meeting with Buffalo Bill at the Planters' House in Denver in the '50s.

"I was walking toward the Hotel with Kit Carson," says Drannan, "when a policeman came running by. 'I deputize you to assist me in arresting stage robbers in the Planters' House,' he said. I knew at once it was the notorious Slade gang brought to bay. I had left my side arms at the store, but I followed the policeman and soon found myself in the row. Two of the gang made for me. I backed toward the end of the hall, defending myself as best I could, until I reached the door and could back no farther. I sparred with them for some time, when one of them struck a vicious blow that grazed the side of my face. I threw my head back and knocked the whole top of the glass door out. Just at that instant Colonel Cody, or Buffalo Bill, caught me by the shoulders and jerked me through the window. He then gave me one of his pistols and said, 'Come on, pard, and we'll clean these fellows out' and we did. After that Kit Carson, Buffalo Bill and myself went on a big hunt in the mountains."

**COPY OF DRANNAN ARTICLE TAKEN FROM THE HOUSTON
CHRONICLE PUBLISHED ON DATE OF
OCTOBER 11, 1910**

CAPT. DRANNAN IS IN HOUSTON

**FAMOUS SCOUT AND FORMER COMPANION OF KIT CARSON
MAY LOCATE HERE
INTERESTING CAREER**

*While in Service of Government he Captured Captain Jack,
Mohawk¹ Chief, Who Assassinated General Canby.
Was Ranger*

Captain Wm. F. Drannan, the celebrated scout, hunter and trapper, and former companion of Kit Carson, Fremont and McGee, is in Houston, and probably will locate here. The Captain, who is past 80² years old, is the sole survivor of that band of intrepid frontiersmen with whom Kit Carson and Fremont made history in the west, which, at that time, was in no sense the west that America knows today.

The story of Capt. Drannan's early life is as strange and interesting as anything ever penned by a Fennimore Cooper. From behind eyes shaded by shaggy gray brows as keen and as piercing as they were in the days of his pioneer life Drannan has seen the evolution of civilization in America, and he was a part of the great American invasion which, headed by General John C. Fremont, crossed the Rockies and pitched camp at what is now the city of Los Angeles. That was in 1848, about the time of the discovery of gold, which attracted to California fortune hunters of every character from citizens of the real, dyed-in-the-wool sort. Those were the days when the red man still claimed as his own the boundless rolling prairies of the west and the whites who had the temerity to hunt or trap in their midst were of a necessity "men with the bark on." Captain Drannan is a man "with the bark left on." He is a typical plainsman. Though his features are expectedly furrowed by the imprint of time and his once Herculean form is perhaps not so erect as it was in the days of yore, he creates the impression of having at one time been a man of superb physique, tall, handsome, in that rugged western way and as fearless as a man had to be to associate with such men as Carson and Fremont.

HIS MEETING WITH CARSON

As the last survivor of the scouts which formerly carried arms under Fremont and Carson, Capt. Drannan occupies a unique position in the present day history of America. Left an orphan at the age of 4, and denied the advantage of a common school education he walked from Nashville, Tennessee, to St. Louis, Missouri, at the age of 15, and there by chance, he first met that distinguished scout and frontiersman, Kit Carson. That was 65 years ago. Conceiving a great liking for the lad, Carson brought him out to the far west on a hunting expedition, entering what is now the state of Colorado, when there were scarcely a score of white settlers in that territory.

In Colorado, Capt. Drannan began his wild, picturesque career as hunter, scout, and Indian fighter, that has lasted more than 30 years, during which time he became familiar with the western country all the way from Fort Scott, Kansas, to San Francisco, California, and Mexico City.

From his home in Louistown, Idaho, Drannan came to Texas about seven months ago and located in the Panhandle. After that he went to Dallas. From there he moved to Fort Worth, where he remained until coming to Houston.

WAS ONCE A TEXAS RANGER

"Yes, I was in Texas before," he said, in answer to a question from the Chronicle representative. "It was in '57 and '58. I was a member of Capt. McGee's band of Texas Rangers, and some rousin' times we had with the redskins." Capt. Drannan was last in Texas near the town of Quanah, near which place the body of Cynthia Ann Parker, mother of Quanah Parker and 'Wild Flower' now repose. Shortly after that gold was discovered in Colorado, and the whole band of McGee's Rangers left the state to look into the reported discoveries.

Much of his Indian fighting was done in the Panhandle country of Texas, and Capt. Drannan states that he formerly camped on the townsite of Amarillo when there were no whites in that part of the state. The frontiersman says he was twice in Fort Worth in the early days, and that McGee and his men pitched their camp where now stands the union depot. Only a few houses and people had settled there then. The old scout also visited Waco when that place was little more than the Indian village it was before the whites came in with 'prairie schooners' and settled

on the west bank of the Brazos river. He knew Col. Pete Ross, a near relative by marriage of Capt. J. S. Rice of Houston, who died a year or two ago in this city. Col. Ross, a brother of Sul Ross, former Governor of the state of Texas, was himself a picturesque, though little chronicled, figure in the early history of Texas.

RECEIVED MANY WOUNDS

Capt. Drannan was wounded nine times by Indians. Once a bullet wound nearly ended his career by breaking his hip bone. Another time an arrow from an Indian bow pinned his right leg to his horse's side. The Captain exhibited to the Chronicle man the scar which resulted from the wound of a tomahawk in the hands of an Indian with whom Capt. Drannan had a hand to hand combat. He has killed but two grizzly bear, but has seen 'mobs' of 'um' in his time.

One of the many services rendered his country by Capt. Drannan was the famous capture of "Capt. Jack," the Modoc Chief, who assassinated General Canby of the U. S. Army. With sixteen men under his command, Capt. Drannan trailed down the culprit Indian, who was fleeing with only his squaw and daughter. Capt. Jack was afterward hung for the crime. The incident transpired in 1873 and the accompanying sketch of Capt. Drannan was made from a tin-type taken on the day of the capture. Capt. Drannan secured the cut and has carried it with him ever since. It was first used as an illustration in an article giving an account of the capture.

MAY LOCATE IN HOUSTON

Nearly all of Capt. Drannan's relics of his early frontier life were destroyed during a fire in Seattle, Washington. The captain has written a book entitled *Thirty-one Years on the Plains and in the Mountains* which is the story of his frontier life, and from the sale of which he depends for a life competence. In the event he located in Houston, Captain Drannan will likely open a small grocery store somewhere in the residence section of the city, and remain here with Mrs. Drannan, until he passes on to the Great Beyond, again to join Carson, Fremont, and the other men with whom he associated in his earlier days. Mrs. Drannan is also in Houston with her husband. She is considerably younger than he, being but 55 years of age. She is a native of the state of Massachusetts.

Capt. Drannan is now in a class with Alonzo Steele and Mr. Zuber, the two survivors of the battle of San Jacinto, but his strong frame and well-preserved physique, due to an active life in the open, would indicate to one who has seen them all three and is able to draw a comparison, that the old scout will outlive the other two. Captain Drannan has covered within the span of his 77² years, and within the scope of his own experience, the growth of an empire that is greater and more populous than the original United States.

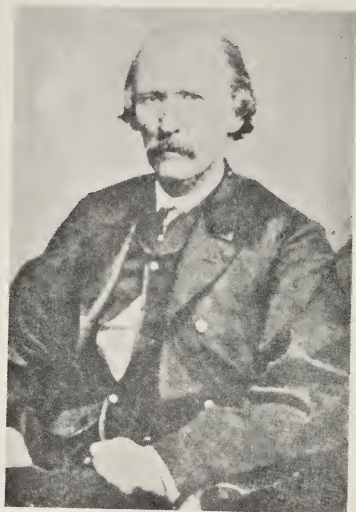
¹'Mohawk' is incorrect. It should be 'Modoc'.

²77 years seems to be more accurate. He was born in 1832.



*Capt. Wm. F. Drannan.
Chief of Scouts.*

CAPT. WM. F. DRANNAN, Chief of Scouts



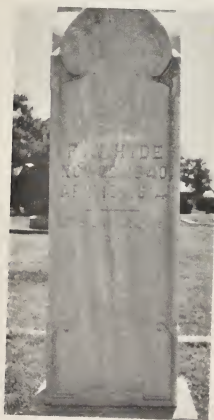
The last photograph of Kit Carson, taken March 1868.



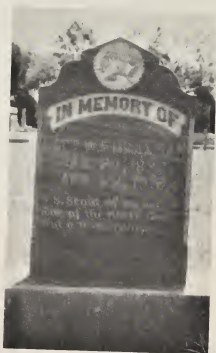
MRS. BELLE H. DRANNAN-BROWN, *writer of the Drannan books.*



View of Elmwood Cemetery, Mineral Wells, Texas.



Close-up of Hyde's Headstone



Close-up of Drannan's headstone

William F. Drannan, & wife }
to } Bill of Sale.
Hattie E. Jook.

Know all men by these presents, that William F. Drannan, of the city of Seattle, King County, Washington Territory (who is joined herein by his wife Anna Drannan) the party of the first part, for and in consideration of the sum of Two hundred and twenty-five Dollars, gold coin of the United States of America, to him in hand paid by Mrs. Hattie E. Jook, of the same residence the party of the second part, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, does by these presents grant, bargain, sell and convey unto the said party of the second part, her executors, administrators and assigns the following described property to-wit:

An undivided half interest in and to the River Side Restaurant situated in the basement of the Minnesota House on the southwest corner of Sixth Second and Washington streets in the city of Seattle, King County, Washington Territory, and all and every of the business furniture, and effects of said Restaurant including two cooking stoves, the bar, tables, two iron dishes, and all and every of the fixtures and water is used to carry on said restaurant and belonging thereto, and all and every of the business thereof and the business thereof it being the intention to sell a full and complete undivided half of said restaurant furniture, business and fixtures.

To Have and to hold the same to the said party of the second part, her executors, administrators and assigns forever; And William F. Drannan do hereby myself, her executors, administrators, covenant and agree to and with the said party of the second part, her executors, administrators, and assigns, to warrant and defend the sale of the said property goods and chattels hereby made unto the said party of the second part, her executors, administrators, and assigns against all and every person and persons whatsoever lawfully claiming or to claim the same.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and

seal the 20th day of November in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighty eight

Signed, sealed and delivered

in presence of

P. P. Carroll

J. Chorn

William F. Drannan

(Seal)

(Seal)

Anna Drannan

Copy of Drannan Bill-of-Sale of one-half interest in restaurant in Seattle, Washington, in 1888



**A DRANNAN ARTICLE PUBLISHED IN AN AMARILLO TEXAS
NEWSPAPER ON DATE OF NOVEMBER 19, 1948, HAVING
BEEN TAKEN FROM A PUBLICATION IN THE CHILDRESS
INDEX OF CHILDRESS, TEXAS**

PLAINS CITY 90 YEARS OLD

*Childress Site of 'Lost Town' Mentioned in
Scout's Story*

A Daily News Regional Feature

Childress which officially lays claim to a founding date in the 1880's is short changing itself in the matter of age.

Not only is the city pretty ancient as Panhandle towns go, but it also could boast of a 'lost colony' legend, according to a recent story in Sam Privitt's "Memories of Childress" column in the *Childress Index*. The columnist quotes from one Capt. Wm. F. Drannan, protege of Kit Carson and guide to trading parties in the Southwest in the 1850's.

The name of the lost colony? Well, it's lost too—somewhere back in the haze of pre-Civil War Texas history. But Drannan's memoirs, published in 1910, describes a settlement "on the present site of the city of Childress, Texas," as the last outpost of civilization on a route from Dallas to Colorado.

Willie Drannan's story, in addition to being one of the first "Chamber of Commerce" descriptions of the Texas Panhandle, also includes incidents which illustrate the direct approach of frontiersmen to the Indian problem.

According to Drannan, he was hired by Capt. McKee of the U. S. Army to pilot a large wagon train from Bent's Fort in Colorado to Dallas and Fort Worth, both raw villages in 1858, but trade rivals then as they are now. The trade in the 1850's was in buffalo hides and horses. New settlers coming into North Texas from Tennessee were all prospective buyers for saddle horses and work stock and the market was booming.

Drannan relied on diplomacy to guide his party through the Indian country on the first leg of their journey from Colorado. After they passed the Texas border, they entered Comanche territory where the scout forgot old acquaintance and used a more direct approach to insure peaceful progress of the train. Briefly, Drannan rode ahead of the train, spotted any Indian

camps and then rode back to hustle his own party into camp some distance away, then at daybreak, the scout and some of his men would slip up to the Indian camp and slit the throats of the sleeping warriors.

Only rarely was it necessary to waste any powder and shot on these early morning forays, Drannan recalled. Not only was the practice economical of ammunition, but it also resulted in added profit for the expedition. The horses rounded up in the Indian camp brought \$125 a head on the Dallas and Fort Worth market. No squeamish attention to ethics entered into the transaction. As Drannan wrote, the Indians probably had stolen the horses from Kansas farmers, and everybody got into the act and everybody profited—except the Kansas farmers. The party's return trip, a quickly planned affair, was what brought the group to Childress. When the traders reached Dallas in the fall of 1858, they learned that gold had been discovered on Cherry Creek in the territory of Colorado. McKee, the train boss, caught the fever and he and Drannan began studying possible routes. Panhandle winters were overrated even then, according to Drannan, who had traveled much of the Panhandle country. He told McKee: "Although it is getting late and we may have some cold weather to contend with, I think our best and shortest route will be what is known as the Panhandle route. There will be plenty of grass for our horses, also nice drinking water in abundance all the way. There will be days when we will be in sight of deer and antelope from morning until night."

Booster Drannan sold his route, and the last stop before plunging into uncharted high plains was listed as Childress, or at least the colony located where Childress now stands.

"There were a few scattering settlements along the trail," the scout wrote. "The place which is now the city of Childress being the largest and also the last sign of civilization which we passed until we struck Bents Fort, which was on the Arkansas River below what is now the City of Pueblo."

Colorado was described as "a territory just a little north of what is now Amarilla. . . . At the time of which I am speaking there was not a house or sign of a living person there (in Amarilla). . . . It was inhabited by wild animals only."

LAST LETTER WRITTEN BY KIT CARSON

Mouth of Purgatoire River

May 5th, 1868

Dear Compadre:

I have received your letter and it has been a satisfaction to me to hear that you are all well. I arrived here on the 11th of last month, sick and worn out, but began to improve from that time and would be comparatively healthy if the misfortune, loosing my wife, hadn't happened. Those were trying days for me. My health is improving now and I am very apt to be on the other side of the mountains by the end of this month; it is almost necessary for me to go, as much on account of business as for the sake of my health, to avoid the heat during the summer months.

You have had before this the particulars of my wife's death and I need not repeat them here. My children are all well.

We are farming as much as can be done without going to any great expense. I had a ditch taken out and everything works well in that respect. I intended to build me a house, but as I apprehend some trouble about our land, I decided to wait until matters are settled.

Now I have told you of my intentions and prospects, I expect you will appreciate the interest I am taking in you and yours and let me know what your calculations are for the future.

It is my intention to send my wife's corpse to Taos, as soon as the weather is cool enough to do so and have taken the necessary steps to have this done, even if I myself should be called away, she shall rest as close to her family as possible. I have given the necessary orders to have my own body, if I should die, and that of my wife's sent together to Taos, to be buried in our graveyard near Elfego. I want neither her nor myself to be buried in the Church.

My best regards to the old lady, (Mrs. Bent) Terresina and your boy, who I am told is a fine child.

Please tell the old lady that there is nobody in the world who can take care of my children but her and she must know that it would be the greatest of favors to me, if she would come and stay until I am healthier and may make such arrangements as would suit her. She has two children here and is among those nearest to her.

The country has changed much since she was here last, no danger of Indians now. A greater number of people are living here, than then.

If she should determine to come, let me know immediately, and I will send a carriage for her. Chipita Gorda is nursing the baby, which is doing very well, but still I am anxious to get another nurse.

Remember me to all my friends, more particularly Miller, and don't delay to give an answer.

Yours truly

C. CARSON.

This copy of Carson's last letter was sent to the author by Mr. C. A. Scheurich. Aloys Scheurich, father of C. A. Scheurich, was Kit Carson's nephew by marriage and was with Carson when he died at Fort Lyons, Colorado, in 1868. Kit Carson married Josefa Jaramilla at Taos, New Mexico, in 1843. Charles Bent, Governor of New Mexico Territory, had already married a sister to Josefa. Aloys Scheurich married the daughter of Charles Bent, and C. A. Scheurich is the son of Aloys Scheurich.

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